

The **H** *Magazine for the Christian Home*
Hearthstone

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- **Christmas Should Be a Family Affair—*Matilda Rose McLaren***
● **Should Families Worship Together?—*Geneve Selsor***

DECEMBER, 1959—25c

The **H** Magazine for the Christian Home Hearthstone

E. LEE NEAL, *Editor*

RUBY CRADDOCK, *Assistant Editor*

ANKO JANSEN, *layout*



"Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among men
with whom he is pleased!"

Luke 2:14

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RICHARD HOILAND, *Executive Secretary*
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Whatever the connotation of the phrase "peace among men" might mean, it seems to have direction for the home. Peace is an active state—not just one of tranquility. Possibly Christmastime is subject to more tension and edginess in family relations than any other season. If some measure of peace is to reign among all the hustle and bustle of activities, it will have to be consciously worked at. Harmony in personal relations will not just happen. Plan early to make this Christmas experience one of a growing understanding of peace—peace at home and peace in our world.

Sometimes adults are prone to think of Christmas as a special season for children. Everything is done for them and with them in mind. It would help if adults would also do things *with* the children. Personal involvement by the entire family would produce the readiness desired for Christmas. Some projects in Christmas preparations for parents and children are given in "Christmas Should Be a Family Affair" by Matilda Rose McLaren.

In addition to the handwork preparations, there are some heart-work preparations to be made. "We Get Ready for Christmas in Our House" by Cornelia C. Maris or the article "Take Time for Christmas" by Elizabeth Tibbals McDowell and the family worship section will produce ideas for the spiritual preparations of your family for Christmas.

For you, *Hearthstone* has a surprise package this month—a play, entitled "A New Kind of Christmas" by Lydia Carr and Ruth M. Ludwig.

No doubt you will be facing some entertainment problems during the holiday. "Christmas in Action" by Beulah G. Squires is designed for an after-dinner game for all ages. The story and actions will provide a hilarious good time. Loie Brandom suggests some additional ideas for games in her article, "A Novel Plan for Christmas Cheer."

Coming next year: A new look for *Hearthstone*. Readers will find additional study articles and guides for parents' study groups; a larger family worship section with weekly themes; and some changes in features.

Until then,

B. C.

Christmas Should Be a

Family Affair

Matilda Rose McLaren

Include the children in the
Christmas preparations

—Religious News Service Photo



"I'M GLAD CHRISTMAS COMES but once, a year," our neighbor slumped into the nearest chair. "There's just too much to do, along with putting up with noisy children home on vacation!"

We felt sorry for our caller; but couldn't agree with her. She is one of those mothers who does everything *for* her children; very little *with* them. Why deny youngsters the joy of making Christmas preparations? It keeps them happy and occupied; teaches new skills.

Kindergartners love making "stained glass" windows. On dime store art paper have your artists trace designs cut from magazine pictures with carbon paper, or let them clip pictures and trace around them. Then suggest they carefully cut out the design and paste colored cellophane on one side. Taped upon a sunny window, or over an old lamp shade, this can be a very attractive Christmas decoration, as can silhouettes of the Wise Men, camels, and stars cut from black paper and pasted on waxed paper that has been cut to fit a favorite window. Did you ever ask little folks to "paint" Christmas scenes on windows with Bon Ami? When, after many attempts, the scene finally passes inspection, color Santa, Rudolf and his brethren, or what-have-you with poster paint which soon saturates through the Bon Ami and makes a colorful, yet privacy-providing, holiday window. Later, it is easily cleaned . . . and thus provides more activity for the children.

Urchins love to decorate their own bedrooms, and does THAT ever help keep them from under foot at psychological moments!

If your daughter is Scout age, she might like to make a more permanent contribution to the household decorations by making a Christmas "tapestry." On wrapping paper cut into nine by twelve or twelve by fifteen inch rectangles have her draw or trace scenes relevant to the season. When the work is "perfect," trace these scenes of the Nativity, Mary and Joseph fleeing into Egypt, Christmas at grandma's, or whatever her theme, on correspondingly sized pieces of muslin . . . the discarded strong corners of a weak-in-the-middle old sheet do very nicely. With crayolas solidly color the outlined scenes, then press with a hot iron between two thicknesses of wrapping paper. A pleasing glazed effect follows. Take a lesson from grandma's quilts and stitch these panels together by alternating them with a natural design. Stars or wreaths seem made to order for neutrals. Hem the assembled piece of art wide

enough to insert a curtain rod at the top, a spreader at the bottom, and hang. Nancy might even win a prize with this at your next state fair.

Boy Scouts enjoy helping, too. We know one who created homemade picture slides. At a local camera shop, he bought three dozen two and one-quarter by four and one-quarter inch glass panes for fifty cents. These he coated with a syrup made by dissolving a package of pure gelatine (Knox) with just enough very hot, but not boiling, water. To avoid bubbles, he applied this with a water color brush, using firm strokes. Then he let the gelatine "set." Thirty minutes or more later, he placed his slides over previously selected pictures and traced them right through the gelatine with a sharp steel pen dipped in India ink. When dry, he filled designs with water color. When these pictures were thrown on the screen, his whole neighborhood *oh-ed* and *ah-ed*.

This same Scout worked out an ingenious table centerpiece. Upon a smooth log about a foot long he nailed a flat piece of orange crating. This formed a base and kept the log from rolling. Across the top he drilled evenly spaced holes, large enough to hold candles. Surrounded by evergreen scraps from the Christmas tree, this made an original candle holder. His uncle copied the idea on a larger scale for the hearth of his sham fireplace.

If your fireplace is real, why not have the children treat a few logs to make Christmas flames really festive? Flickers jumping from chemically treated logs can be a whole rainbow of colors. Use two parts of chemical to five parts of shellac and keep your offspring active and happy painting logs with an old paint brush. This should be done at least two days before logs are used. Another way of getting the same result is to soak the logs in a pail or keg into which has been poured about three inches of water to dilute one-half pound of the chemical. It

is fun to soak one end of a log into that which will produce green flames; the other, into orange. This method calls for three days of soaking and three weeks of drying, and could give sonny something to do during Thanksgiving vacation. If you're lazy, just mix the right chemical with sawdust and sprinkle onto burning logs. This is not nearly so relaxing and is inclined to be messy. To produce colored flames you will want to purchase the following chemicals from your drugstore: Potassium chlorate produces a violet flame, costs 5¢ per ounce; potassium nitrate, yellow, at 5¢ per ounce; strontium nitrate, red, at 10¢ per ounce; calcium chloride, orange, at 5¢ per ounce; barium nitrate, apple green, 10¢ per ounce; copper nitrate, emerald, 10¢ per ounce; borax, green, 25¢ per pound; salt, yellow.

Toy tea sets run into real money. Why not let Susie make one for Cousin Nancy? Ordinary garden clay can be modeled into dolls' dishes, placed on the ledge inside the furnace door overnight to "bake" and then painted with poster paint. When dry, shellac.

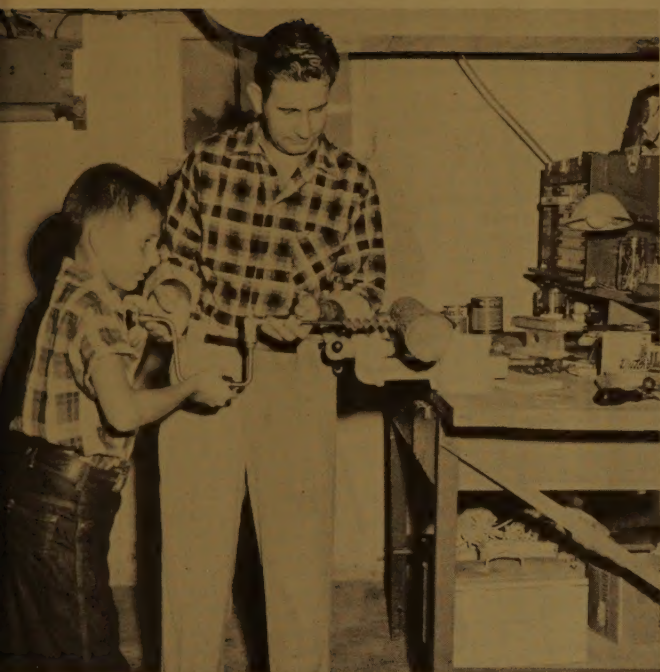
Perhaps when Baby Sister sees Big Sister modeling these dishes, she will shout, "Me, too!" For homemade modeling clay, mix together four cups of flour, two cups of salt, two tablespoonfuls of powdered alum and two-thirds cup of water. Knead thoroughly on waxed paper. When smooth, divide batch and color portions green, blue, red, yellow, with cake coloring. Paint empty soup cans to correspond, drop in modeling clay. With a rubber band snap a moist cloth cover on top and your young artist will have the time of her life, almost for free.

Was there ever a baby who didn't like to string beads? Her kindergarten sister will take pride in making these: Mix two cups of flour, one cup of salt and a few drops of perfumed water, enough to make a dough. Color portions. Between hands roll



A helping hand from Mother plus a few items such as carbon paper, a design from a magazine, paper, pencil, and scissors will give the daughter pleasure in making the window decorations.

—Photo by erb



For a unique candle holder, father and son could try drilling evenly spaced holes into a foot-long log.

—Photo by erb

out the beads, large enough for baby to handle with ease, and while still moist punch hole needed for stringing with a nail. Spread these out to dry. Give baby a shoelace and she'll spend hours "sewing" them together. Painting empty spools provides the same double-header activity.

Today our magazines are so colorful, so artistic, it's a shame to pass them on to paper drives before giving them a good seissoring. Encourage children to clip seasonal pictures and paste them into picture books made of colored sheets of cambrie that you have stitched up stoutly on the sewing machine. Not only do these make substantial gifts for the family, but also they are always welcomed at orphans' homes and children's hospitals. Last year's Christmas cards come in handy for this project, too. Have you ever converted those cards in "To *you*, from *me*" identification cards for your gifts? A little clipping here, hole punching there; with the addition of a bit of ribbon they turn into beauties. (Pinking shears help too.)

Children love to fashion costume jewelry from a wad of wallpaper cleaner. Insert small safety pins on the back of that realistic rose design before it dries. Then paint with poster paint or fingernail polish and shellac.

Baby's most welcome noise-maker is nothing more than a glorified cylindrical cereal carton into which a few pebbles or beans have been dropped before the lid was securely pasted back on. Paste on a wallpaper dress and roll away.

No house ever had too many wastebaskets. Homemade ones can be the answer to daughter's gift problem. Neatly cover properly sized grocery cartons with plain wallpaper, using liquid starch for

"stickum." Cut decals from magazines and decorate appropriately. Recently we were entertained in a home which included one such in the kitchen. "We change scenery by changing 'face,'" laughed the proud Mom as she turned her basket to exhibit its four sides which, in turn, suggested a colorful wiener roast, salads, mouth-watering cakes and a baby being fed. The one in dad's den was covered with pipes, books, playing cards, and "the fish that got away." Big brother's zoomed with airplanes and cars. Sister's dresser model, with movie stars.

We hope you haven't discarded your aluminum milk bottle caps and burnt-out light globes. The caps can be shaped into glittering cones. When strung alternately with painted macaroni and homemade beads, the strands make a shiny addition to your tree or can be used to embellish doors and banisters. For animals under that tree, cover the light globes with wrapping paper for the bodies of giraffes, deer, and ducks. With a little imagination, paper twists become legs, feet, tails; chicken feathers become wings; thorns and twigs, horns and antlers. Paint proper color with water colors.

It's easy to make realistic fruit to bob from those branches. With papier-mâché (strips of newspaper soaked in heavy flour-and-water paste) cover apples, oranges, pears. When dry, cut away by halves, remove real fruit, paste back together with paper strips, after inserting a paper clip or ribbon loop for hanger. Paint in natural colors.

While doing your Christmas baking, save egg shells by blowing out contents after punching holes in top and bottom with nail or ice pick. When shells are dry, wipe with soap, paint; insert ribbon for hanger.

Does your lad have a set of tools? Then let him saw out acrobats, airplanes, animals, angels from orange crating. Again the magazine pictures come in handy for patterns which he can trace onto the boards, then saw out and color or paint. Fasten strings of equal length to each leg or side; with the ornament for one side, make of these a triangle by using an orange or apple for weight and the masterpiece will balance from a tree limb.

Do fireproof that tree. As soon as you bring it home, under water, cut its stem in a V shape. Cover it with a wet rag while transferring to a solution of ammonium sulphate. To know how strong your solution should be, weigh the tree; divide number of pounds by four. The answer is the number of pounds of chemical you should use. Add one-half pint of water to each pound of chemical and mix in as narrow mouthed a container as will accommodate your tree, for minimum evaporation. Allow to soak two or three days in a temperature not over 65 degrees. Your tree will be greener and fireproof until needles start shedding. That's the danger signal which, with an untreated tree, often sets in almost immediately. Fireproofing the tree may be too heavy a job for Junior, but what's the matter with Father? After all, Christmas should be a family affair. When it is, Mother doesn't sigh, "I'm glad Christmas comes but once a year!" She, too, anticipates it.

Take Time for Christmas

by Elizabeth Tibbals McDowell



Take time to read the Christmas story in the Bible.

HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU READ articles deploring the increasing commercialization of Christmas? What minister has not urged his congregation to combat it? What parent has not felt at least a little discouraged upon seeing Christmas lights early in November, and hearing recorded carols in popularized versions blaring from loud speakers before the Thanksgiving turkey is even in the oven? Surely, if Christmas is to be the kind of home and church festival that will help to interpret the meaning of the Christ Child's birth to children and older folks alike, families must work to make it so. If business and advertising interests begin early, then how much more important it becomes for Christian families to "begin early" too, and to take time for a Christian Christmas.

Plan early. Half the fun of

Christmas festivities comes in anticipation of the celebration. Let the children share the fun with you and have a part in making the plans for a happy family Christmas. Perhaps you will hold a special family council to make plans for your Christmas this year. Perhaps you will do it less formally. So many more worthwhile things can be done if you look ahead at the possibilities and agree on some activities, some of the times when you will do things together, and some divisions of responsibilities in carrying out your plans. Above all, be careful not to plan for more than you can do with a sense of satisfaction and real enjoyment. Hurry and tension only lead to trouble. Overstimulated children and nerve-frazzled adults do not achieve the kind of Christmas that we all long to experience each year. Young

children particularly need time to carry out their plans and to enjoy the beauty of music and stories and pictures in leisurely fashion.

Of course, there will be shopping to do, and quite likely some gifts to be made, before the fun of wrapping and placing them under the tree. Begin early and avoid the tiring crowds and harassed sales people. Plan to help the younger children share in the giving, too. Learning to play Santa Claus to others in the home and neighborhood from the very start is the best insurance against the disillusionment of learning that "there isn't any Santa Claus"; and it helps to put the emphasis on the joy of giving happiness rather than simply receiving gifts. Gifts which the children can make themselves usually mean more to them at first, but when the time

(Continued on page 28)

I'LL BE HOME FOR CHRISTMAS



by
Berniece
Roer

Buffalo, New York
January

My Dearest Mother:

It was wonderful to be home at Christmas time, and my birthday time, too! but alas . . . Operation Homeward was successful but the patient has relapsed!

Barry really blew up this morning. "I was hoping," he combusted, "that after spending our savings on a trip to Dallas, you'd be satisfied for awhile! We just get back and you're talking about going there in June! Nothin' doin'! No more long trips for at least a couple of years. We've got to start Nicky's college fund, for one thing . . ." and on and on, with gestures.

Imagine worrying about a year-old baby's college fund! But don't worry, Mother, because I've started a sugar-bowl fund! I know I can save enough for our fare if I cut off all our 'frills.'

I'll be home next Christmas, if not before!

Love,
Holly

February

Darling Mother:

What a frantic day! I had clothes washing in the basement, and went upstairs and put Nicky to bed

for his nap. When I opened the basement door to go back down, smoke poured into the apartment. I almost died. I ran for Nicky and practically threw him out the door, then dashed downstairs. My second-hand washer had gone blooey and the belt burned out. Gaggling and fumbling, I managed to unplug it and stumble back upstairs and call the janitor.

Barry said if I ever go back alone in a smoking basement, he'll slug me! (Guess he loves me!)

How I miss you guys.

Love,
Holly

March

Mother Dearest:

You and Dad are sweet to want to buy me a new washer. I'm returning your check, and please don't send any more! Apparently you aren't too well acquainted with your son-in-law! He says if his wife needs a washer, he'll buy it!

Barry just doesn't understand a family relationship like ours . . . I can't even mention the word H-O-M-E to him anymore . . . He gets cross as a crab. But come December, I'll spring my sugar bowl on him, and that will take care of that!

Love,
Holly

April

Mother Dear:

What did you buy pretty for Easter? I wore my new washer! Barry was ready to purchase a summer suit, and *that* took care of the down-payment.

Bless his heart . . . I remember how patient and pitiful he was last summer, with his one suit. A light tan job. Each Saturday, since there weren't many people at the plant, he'd wear a sport shirt and slacks, drop the suit at the cleaners, and pick it up on his way home. But even so, who else under those conditions, could look like a mature 'Tony Curtis'? I was tempted to turn over my sugar bowl for the washer, but I've just *got* to get home for a visit, and that's the only way I'll make it . . .

Nicky's growing fast! He's so good. But not always.

Love,
Holly

May

Dear Mother:

Glad you're all okay. We're fine, except Barry and I don't seem to be 'in the same orbit' anymore. He's working long hours and I get so lonesome . . . But husbands *do* have a big responsibility, don't they?

It's difficult to make friends here; people aren't as chummy as they are in Dallas. Sometimes I lie in bed at night, and yearn so to be home and part of the family again. It isn't that I don't love Barry and Nicky. It's just some sort of a feeling inside me . . .

Mother, Mother, why did I have to move so far from home . . .

Love,
Holly

June

Dear Mother:

How are things at home? Wish I could see for myself . . . course I will, come December, so be prepared for the invasion. The things I'll have to bring for Nicky!

Summer is here, too. *Finally*. Wish I could have gone on the family picnic with you all. Sunday, Barry said, "Let's go on a picnic." And Mother, I had to either laugh or cry, so I laughed. Imagine a picnic with two and a half people!

Nicky's asking . . . nay, *demanding* that we go for a walk.

Love,
Holly

July

Dear Mama:

You'll never guess what! Barry came in all excited . . . wants us to buy a house! But the more we talked of houses, the more I thought of Dallas, and I started to cry . . . couldn't help it. And Barry went out slamming the door so hard that I guess the apartment manager will *see* that we move now!

Sometimes I think we're misfits, and if it weren't for Nicky . . . oh, well, it's not right to bother you

with my troubles.

The climate isn't really so bad here. But first thing I look for in the paper is to see what kind of weather *you're* having. It's funny, but by knowing if it's raining or just being a beautiful day, I know what you are all doing at home. Then I close my eyes and get the actual feeling of being there . . . I can even smell the food you're cooking. Like we used to have baked beans on washday, and chili on cold wet days. Remember? Golly, the way I re-live my youth, you'd think I was fast approaching ninety!

Love,
Holly

August:

Dear Mom:

Don't have time to write much now that we're house-hunting.

You wanted to hear more about Nicky . . . well, he's getting to be more company for me . . . He sits at the table now and we seem more like a family. He also *sets* the table for me. Cups and saucers and anything *else*, he can reach goes on, and I cook to the tune of crashing crockery.

After church this morning, I picked him up and it was like lifting a sack of sand. Not unreasonably, for he had tried to bring the kindergarten sandbox home in his pockets!

It'll be nice for Nicky to have a yard to play in . . . with sandbox!

Love,
Holly

September

Dear Mom:

We finally found our house! It's not a new little house, Mother. It's an old big house like ours. Barry and I are going to jump in our jeans and get to work on it. We've got lots of time though, because we won't be able to move till January.

Love,
Holly

October

Dear Mom:

Not much news. Met some of our neighbors-to-be. Very friendly!

There are a million things to do, and I'm *so* busy. Not much to write about as you don't know the people or things up here.

But lots of love,
Holly

November

Dear Mother:

Yes, I'm all right. Don't worry about me so much! And yes, of *course* I'll be home for Christmas! Everything is Christmas-y here already!

I spied a little petit-point stool like yours, in an antique shop, and I couldn't resist buying it! (Yes, I dipped into the sugar bowl, just a little.)

Happy Thanksgiving to you all.

Love,
Holly

(Continued on page 28)

WELCOME, LEARNER



by Geneve Selsor

—Art FitzSimmons

Our high school and college young people are in dramatic and dynamic learning situations. Our parental example and our counsel is important. In the home, and in the church, we should create an environment in which they can work out their questions and problems. And as they do—we must too. This story suggests why, and how.

The clock hands pointed to 2:00 when Pastor Murphy entered his office. He knew he would have to rush through his mail because he had several hos-

pital calls that would take the rest of his afternoon.

"Hi, Preach," a gay and slightly irreverent voice called from the hall. "Are you working, or waiting to hear the word from a college freshman?"

The minister turned from his cluttered desk to inspect his visitor. He saw a smiling girl, dressed in somewhat soiled jeans and sweat shirt, standing in his office door.

"Well come in, Linda. Don't you know a minister never works. He just waits. 'They who wait for the LORD . . . shall mount up with wings like eagles . . .'"

"Yeah, but if you are going to make like an eagle, Preach, you'd better carry a parachute for safety."

"Don't tell me that is what you've learned during the first three and a half months of college, Linda,

to put your trust in parachutes." Mr. Murphy teased the girl gently.

"Not really, Preach, but it keeps the conversation from getting too serious. While I'm in the church, I wanted to check on you and see if you are the same person you were before I went to college. Have you ever noticed how people change when you go away and leave them alone for a while?" Linda scooted up a chair, curled her leg under her and sat down.

"This is a formal visit really," Linda explained, patting her jean-covered knee. "Formal visit, that is, to the Christmas tree. I'm meeting with the Intermediate's Fellowship to help decorate. But I came early. You know about being an early bush . . . or is it a bird?"

Mr. Murphy casually restacked some papers on his desk. He turned over last Sunday's bulletin and noted the time that had been announced for the Intermediate Fellowship's tree-decorating project. The announcement plainly said 3:45, preceding the family night dinner, and here it was just shortly after 2:00. Mr. Murphy wondered if Linda's visit was more than casual. He really ought to clear certain urgent correspondence so his secretary could go to work on it. And there were seven hospital calls to be made. If Linda was just stopping by to say a casual "Hello," he ought to greet her and then get on with his work. Yet he sensed something more than a casual drop-in visit.

"What does this early bird want, besides worms," Pastor Murphy asked. "I'm not sure my conversation will meet your new academic standards. After all, a college girl is very busy, very bright, and very adequate."

Linda picked up a sheet of paper from his desk and began carefully pleating it. On each pleat she lavished measured judgment. She did not look at Mr. Murphy for three pleats. Then she said, "You know, Preach, you can get all confused when you go to school. It is all so big and new and strange, and everything rushes in at you. You don't have time to make careful judgments. You just fall in line and hope what you've always done will work here. And it doesn't—doesn't work I mean."

"Like me calling you Preach, for instance. I can't call my professors, Teach."

"Why do you want to call me Preach, Linda?"

"I did it first to show my mother what good friends we were. Then I did it from habit. Now I wanted to see if you still didn't care what I called you. When I call you Preach, I feel you are not removed from me and my problems by your job. That way, when you talk, I can believe you are answering my needs as a friend. Then what you say is true because you have found it to be so and you aren't telling me a bunch of junk because you are a minister saying what ministers are supposed to say."

"Well, Linda, I don't mind what you call me. If 'Preach' is synonymous with friend, that is fine.

Whatever makes me your friend and enables you to talk freely with me is what I'm interested in. I'm also interested in what you say about 'falling in line' and hoping past habits will carry you through new situations in college. I gather from your look that you are not finding this adequate. Like to tell me about it?"

"That's what I'm doing. I'm just trying to decide where to begin." Linda finished the pleating but now her nervous fingers began to re-do her job.

"When I pick up a new weekly magazine, I always start in the middle and go either forward or backward. It is confusing but I get through eventually," Mr. Murphy suggested.

"Well, then to begin in the middle would be when I decided I wanted to be director of religious education. Remember? I was a senior in high school," Linda began. "You gave me several suggestions of where I could help in the church program and spent a lot of time with me. At first I thought, 'Man, this is easy—a real jive job!' Then I began having doubts which I tried not to think about. Doubts like why didn't my parents like to come to church regularly, and why was it wrong for me to steal but all right for Daddy to pad his expense account. Doubts about telling the children in the primary department to 'love their neighbor' and to 'forgive those who trespass against them,' all the time knowing that Mother has not spoken to one neighbor in years because that neighbor complained about my dog a long time ago."

"Sounds like I was not respectful to my parents, doesn't it? Well, that's what I thought, so I decided to forget what was real and just teach what ought to be. And this worked fine for a while. Really until I was on my way, actually on my way to school." Linda now idly fanned herself with the pleated sheet of paper.

"When I got to college, all the familiar patterns of my life were gone. I knew no one, and I was trying to do something bigger than I had ever done before. I looked for assurance. I told myself, 'This is going to be just one big summer youth conference, full of kids like me who will be my friends. Pretty soon the conference will be over and I will go back home just like always.'"

"Well, Preach, college is not conference. That prop folded. It didn't take me long to find that all the kids were not going to be like me, and not all of them were going to be my friends. Many of us were going to college for different purposes. We did not have common objectives and we could not support one another. Another prop crumpled."

"In college I have had to face the implications of certain patterns of living. It was all right to share exam answers, stay in bed on Sunday, borrow clothes without asking, and cultivate particular girls. But, take this last. Somebody can get hurt when these are the accepted patterns. There was a Chinese girl, An-Lu, who lived a while on our floor. At first every-

one thought it was fun to be nice to her. But pretty soon the novelty of knowing a foreign student wore off. Before I knew it, An-Lu had moved. Jackie, my suite mate, said she heard An-Lu had gone to live with an off-campus family because the dorm was so lonesome. Jackie said, 'Lonesome! Can you imagine that? With 422 girls in our dorm the girl says she's lonesome!'

"Well, Preach, I cried that night and Jackie said, 'What's wrong with you, Linda?' So I said I was homesick and really I was, but I was also crying for An-Lu who, I felt, was probably even more homesick and confused than I."

Linda once more smoothed the pleats from the sheet of paper and began pleating it the other way. Mr. Murphy said, "What did you do then, Linda?"

"Well, I didn't look up An-Lu. I was too busy, or I thought I was. But I did start going to dorm devotionals... because I felt so guilty, somehow."

"That helped you, I'm sure," Mr. Murphy said, glancing at his watch.

"No, it didn't help at all, Preach. No more than all the words with no meaning that we say everyday. Like 'I'm sorry' or 'Come see me soon' or 'Let me hear from you.' They were just words I heard in those devotionals. I thought about the people saying them and I felt that's really all they were—words with no meaning to the people saying them or to the people listening.

"If I'd said to An-Lu, 'Let me hear from you' and she had said, 'It's like this Linda' and tried to tell me why she was lonely, I'd probably have glanced at my watch and said I had to run to the library or go to cello practice. You know what I mean, Preach?"

Mr. Murphy's back straightened in his swivel chair and he looked at the girl facing him. "Linda, I do know and I am more guilty than you know of this very thing." He sat uneasily in his chair and thought, "As you did it to one of the least of these..."

"I wondered about my feelings toward those devotionals and finally I stopped going. Jackie asked why didn't I go anymore, but I thought I'd better not tell her the way I felt. Instead I told her I did better with private prayer time. So Jackie didn't go anymore either. But I don't think she thought much about God or how to be a better friend.

"I still went to church because I had always gone. Then, too, the music at the university church is lovely. I asked Jackie why she didn't get up and go with me, but she said her parents never went and if they could stay in and sleep late so could she.

"That set me to remembering when I first went to church. I was just six and had a new dress. Mother had not planned to go to church that Sunday. She expected to be too busy getting dinner. I started off to Sunday church school and church with some neighbor, I don't remember who. I do remember that I sat alone in church, while all my friends were sitting with their mothers and fathers. That bothered me. I wiggled and twisted around in my seat to see how

the folks behind me were behaving. Toward the end of the sermon I twisted far enough to notice that sitting three rows back of my seat were my mother and father! Why or how or when they came I don't know.

"But, Preach, to this day, I can remember the happy, warm, 'I've-just-been-hugged' feeling that came over me. The invitation hymn that morning was 'Jesus Is Tenderly Calling Thee Home' and to the surprise of the people between me and the aisle I climbed out in front of them and started out, but in reverse. I wasn't going to join the church, I was going back to join Mother and Daddy."

Mr. Murphy found himself blinking his eyes rapidly. He said nothing aloud but thought, "If she keeps talking she'll find the answer to her confusion herself!"

"Mother told me later if I wanted to go to church she could go too and so could Daddy. Then she hugged me and I felt just about right.

"I wish my folks could make an effort or two like that now. Mother and Daddy are so far apart these days that they seem like strangers to each other. I know they have trouble when I'm not at home. If they could just have something to draw them together." Linda wiped her nose quickly on a lipstick smeared tissue and said, "You know, I feel just like this silly paper I've been pleating. I'm all full of lines going both ways. They make a pretty pattern but not much sense."

Mr. Murphy looked at the creased piece of paper. Linda continued, "They are just lines on a paper leading nowhere. I'm a line, and Mother and Daddy are lines and..." Linda stopped.

Mr. Murphy said gently, "And you wonder if I'm a line leading nowhere? It might help you to know that all of us feel at times that we are lines leading nowhere. There is no single thing I can say to you right now that will lead you out of this confusion. You are confused because what you were told and what you really want to believe are different from what you see and do. You hear parents, teachers, preachers, and friends say one thing and then see them do something else."

"What makes me think I know more than my parents and teachers about how to act?" Linda asked.

"Adults make so many compromises with life and society in order to secure what they think will bring happiness to them and their families. They really want their children to love God and act as He would want them to but they have often found it impractical, uncomfortable, and time-consuming to do so.

"Young people must not follow blindly along the lines drawn by their parents just because they are drawn for them. They must decide what is best for themselves in each situation. Listen to the words used in church and in devotionals, Linda, and look for new meaning in them. Relate them to your situation, and see if they speak at all to it.

(Continued on page 30)



—from the Author.

A New Kind of Christmas

by Lydia Carr, Ruth M. Ludwig

(Adapted from Elisabeth Logan Davis' story in the December, 1955, issue of "Hearthstone")

SCENE: American family living room. Christmas tree and other Christmas decorations overly elaborate to give contrast emphasis.

CHARACTERS:

FATHER—A man just over fifty years of age, of calm appearance.

MOTHER—A harried woman, bothered by the rush and crush of Christmas.

GRANDFATHER—Lives in memories of bygone Christmases.

DOCTOR DAUGHTER—Professional in appearance. An intern at local General Hospital.

CHUCK—A teen-age, imaginative son.

PAM—Eight-year-old daughter. A noisy, curious child.

ANN and GEORGE—The married daughter and husband. **BILL and SIS**, their children.

Act One

FATHER is seated in favorite chair, reading the newspaper.

GRANDFATHER is near the lamp, reading the Bible. He looks up in interest and amazement at all the commotion in this act. Shakes his head at intervals as if wondering how and when it is all going to end. He does not speak.

(This entire scene is one of hubbub and haste.)

PAM: (Entering noisily. Jumps rope or bounces large ball. Drops it to rummage among gifts. Holds one and calls to Mother in kitchen.) Oh, Mom, where did this one come from? Who's it for?

MOTHER: (Enters from the kitchen. Frazzled in appearance. Dries hands on apron.) Pam! How many times have I told you to leave those packages alone! You will have the wrappings all torn before Christmas Day gets here. Now, you let them be! (Shakes apron to dry.) Thank goodness the dishes are done. They are one thing out of the way. I just don't know how I can stand much more of this turmoil. Sometimes, I wish Christmas would never come.

(Doorbell rings. Special delivery package arrives.)

PAM: (Takes package and dances over to the tree, turning it around and around as she goes.) Oh, Mom! Here's still another one. I wonder what's in it for me!

(Telephone rings.)

FATHER: (Goes to answer. Speaks with a loud "Hello," and then turns his back to room as he talks. Gestures with free hand.)

(**DOCTOR DAUGHTER** enters, dressed in evening gown.)

MOTHER: How pretty our Doctor Daughter is tonight. It is good to see you in feminine clothing, instead of your tailored doctor suits. How did things go at ----- General Hospital today?

DOCTOR DAUGHTER: It was a busy one. So many pathetic cases. And it always seems worse at Christmas. There is little anticipation of joy for those folk. Some won't have even a candy cane for a gift. (Picks up evening

wrap.) I hope I can get away before the telephone rings again.

FATHER: (*Returning from telephone.*) Every day gets to be more and more of a rat race for all of us.

MOTHER: Speaking of rat races, you had better race upstairs and get dressed for the play at the theater. I'm all ready but changing my dress and smoothing my hair. Now hurry! We've only got twenty minutes.

FATHER: (*Grumbles, but starts. Then turns to DOCTOR DAUGHTER.*) Where are you headed for tonight, Doc?

DOCTOR DAUGHTER: For the Silver Glade Room at the Cosmopolitan Hotel. The Hospital Benefit Association is giving a ball. I've got to hurry.

(*Name of local hotel may be substituted here.*)

(*Both FATHER and DAUGHTER start, then stop as CHUCK enters.*)

CHUCK: (*Dashing in with armload of packages.*) This shopping sure is rough. Thank goodness I'm finished. Sorry to have missed dinner, Mom. Got a sandwich? I've got to hurry over to the church to practice for the Christmas program.

PAM: (*Moves toward CHUCK to inspect his packages.*)

DOCTOR DAUGHTER: (*Clutches wrap and hurries toward the door.*)

FATHER: (*Races for upstairs doorway.*)

CHUCK: (*Evades PAM and hurries toward tree. Stumbles and packages fly in all directions.*)

MOTHER: (*Wails.*) Oh, Chuck!

(*Doorbell rings loudly.*)

(*Telephone rings.*)

Curtain

Act Two

SCENE: *Family living room a year later. Clothing change. No Christmas decorations as yet.*

FATHER reads newspaper.

MOTHER knits.

GRANDFATHER reads Bible.

DOCTOR DAUGHTER reads Dale Evans' "Christmas Is Always."

PAM sprawls on floor looking at a magazine.

CHUCK does homework at table.

FATHER: Here comes Christmas again! (*Holds up evening paper for all to see.*) "Only twenty-nine more shopping days until Christmas."

(*Everyone groans.*)

PAM: (*Jumps to her feet and dances around excitedly.*) Goody! Goody! Santa Claus is coming.

MOTHER: Oh Pam! Be quiet. (*Puts*

hands over ears, then uncovers them as PAM drops to former position on rug.) Every year, I think I cannot go through this mad Christmas rush again. And after all these years, I have run out of ideas, especially for Aunt Florence. (*Knitting needles fly*) I've been switching from bed jacket to bedroom slippers, to silk scarf, until it's become monotonous. I don't know what to get her this Christmas. And trying to find just the right gifts to please others—the right color—right size—and most of all, the right price for my purse, grows more difficult all the time. Prices seem to go higher each year. Just once, I would like Christmas to be free from crowds, aching feet, and tired faces.

DOCTOR DAUGHTER: (*Looking up from her book.*) Here is a book that tells how to make Christmas Really Christmas. It's *Christmas Is Always*, by Dale Evans Rogers. If we followed its teaching, Uncle Bob would not have to return his neckties every year. The one you gave him last Christmas, Chuck (*Chiding*), the one with the red roosters on it—where on earth could he have worn it?

CHUCK: Oh, lay off, Doc. The one you gave me with the pink flowers on it wasn't much better.

FATHER: It isn't only the exchange of unsuitable gifts which mars the Christmas spirit, it is the great confusion most everyone experiences. Why, just last Sunday, one of the men at church thanked me for my beautiful Christmas card. I haven't even sent him one. It's too early. And furthermore, he's not even on my list.

DOCTOR DAUGHTER: Why Father, probably it was a business gesture. His firm might hire someone to duplicate his signature. Many business firms find greeting cards profitable for advertisement, you know. Perhaps (*Grins slyly*) he's not even certain he's sending you one—or he might like your advice on a good duplicating service.

MOTHER: Oh, the fuss and confusion. I wish we could have a new kind of Christmas—one that's really Christmas.

CHUCK: (*Rises to feet, almost stumbles over PAM on floor.*) Hey Sis! What are you looking at so hard?

PAM: This picture. It's supposed to be a little girl's birthday party. It's sure a funny one.

CHUCK: (*Takes magazine and looks at picture.*)

DOCTOR DAUGHTER: (*Takes magazine from CHUCK.*) Here, let me see it. (*Explains picture to family.*) Look at the little tyke sitting there so forlornly with her glass of milk and her tiny cake while the grown-ups have their tall glasses of drinks. Even the two little candles on her cake look lonely. It isn't much of a birthday

for her, is it? But it's surely typical of some adult thinking.

CHUCK: (*Snaps fingers. Turns to MOTHER.*) Say, Mom. That's it. It's like this picture. We've been celebrating for everyone else but the Christ Child. We could have a brand new kind of Christmas such as the Wise Men had bringing gifts to the Christ Child.

DOCTOR DAUGHTER: You mean, Chuck, that we should decide as a family whether to have our same kind of Christmas or not?

CHUCK: Sure thing. Let's let Christ have a birthday all to himself. After all, we can give presents to each other on our own special birthdays.

MOTHER: Why, of course. Why haven't we had the courage before to voice such a plan? It has always seemed so selfish to me to sit around our own comfortable fire, and to have presents piled high under our own glistening tree, when there are so many people in the world who have no one to send them even a Christmas card.

FATHER: (*Goes to desk. Brings file folder.*) Just look at all the requests for money—for the blind, for crippled children, for Korean orphans, for children in Palestine. These are to T.B. stamps, and for the Salvation Army. Here are some for Boys Ranch in Amarillo, and for the Muscular Dystrophy cause. I must say they surely give a twinge of pain to my Christian conscience. I only wish I could give to all of them. I do give to some, but what can I do with the rest—burn them?

DOCTOR DAUGHTER: I see people every day in the wards at-----General Hospital. Many are elderly, many are children, who never get a card, let alone a present. And then there are all the lonely, unloved people in the convalescent homes. Being a doctor is not at all glamorous—when the heart constantly aches for these people.

MOTHER: How casually we take the hundreds of cards we get. Some are far removed from the Christ-Birthday thought. But in spite of cats and dogs, we are at least remembered.

GRANDFATHER: You can say what you like, but the old-fashioned Christmases that had real religious meaning were the best, to my way of thinking.

DOCTOR DAUGHTER: I think you're right, Gramps, but if we have this new kind of Christmas, a real celebration of Christ's birthday, will any of you be disappointed? Will the children feel frustrated when all their playmates display their toys?

MOTHER: (*Short laugh.*) Well, speaking of frustrations, I heard Miss Perkins, a teacher in the school, tell about a little boy in the nursery who said to her: "I don't want Christmas anymore." And when she asked

him why, he said: "Because I got more trucks than I want."

DOCTOR DAUGHTER: (*Rising to move about the room in deep thought.*) We could still keep Christmas for the children, but, maybe, for the rest of us who are grown-ups, things should change.

(*Doorbell rings. CHUCK goes to the door and invites his married sister and her husband to enter.*)

FATHER: Come in Son-in-law. Where are the children?

ANN: They were tired from all this Christmas hullabaloo. We knew the best place for them was in bed. A neighbor girl is sitting with them. We thought we would drop in for awhile and talk over Christmas plans.

CHUCK: We've got 'em, and how! We're going to try something new this year. We are going to keep Christmas as Christ's birthday, and we'll celebrate our own when our birthdays come around. We are really going to change things.

GEORGE: Sounds interesting. I surely think it is worth the try. Maybe we can help to change some other things too. For example, I was invited to some parties in our office building last year. Most of the people were drunk, and I didn't stay long. I kept saying to myself, "How does Christ like such a birthday party?" Maybe we should stop calling December 25th Christmas.

MOTHER: Who is going to put Christ in Christmas? I'll tell you! The Christian families! And Christian families should pull away from the commercial angle too.

FATHER: I'm beginning to feel proud of all of you. Perhaps, after all, we have advanced in our thinking.

ANN: I agree with all of you up to a point. But, will this plan make Christmas seem very dull? What will we do when it comes to present-opening time? Just sit around and look at one another blankly? What about our relatives? Will they understand?

CHUCK: Maybe they don't enjoy the Holiday rush any more than Mother does. Anyway it's worth trying to plan something different for Christmas. Let's get with it.

Curtain

Act Three

SETTING: *Same living room. Christmas Day. Tastefully decorated in contrast to first scene. Several carefully wrapped packages beneath tree. Family grouped about tree.*

FATHER: (*Takes "Bible" in hand, opens it, passes it to Son-in-law, GEORGE.*) Will you read the scripture for us, George?

GEORGE: Surely, Dad. (*Reads Matthew 25:35-41.*)

FATHER: Will you lead us in prayer, Grandad?

GRANDFATHER: O Mighty Father, Maker of heaven and earth, we thank Thee for the gift of Thy Son, born in lowly Bethlehem, so long ago. May we ever be reminded that He came not to bring tinsel and trinkets into our lives, but a deep abiding beauty to grow in our hearts. May we open our hearts on this, His birthday, to the gift of His Spirit until we become aware of the needs of others and return His gift to Him again in service to "These Least." May He find a truly happy birthday in the gifts we have brought to Him today. Through His name, we give thanks. Amen.

FATHER: (*Acting as master of ceremonies.*) I shall open my gifts first. (*Smiles as he unties box. Takes out folder of appeals. Stamps fall to floor.*) I have given something to each one of these appeals. Quite a sum, thanks to each of you who did not encroach on Jesus' birthday.

DOCTOR DAUGHTER: I am reminded of Robert Stevenson who gave up his birthday to a little girl because he didn't need it any more. (*Reaches under the tree to take a projector and slides from their wrappings.*)

EVERYONE: (*Oh's and Ah's*)

DOCTOR DAUGHTER: I have this projector and slides for the children at ----- General Hospital. It might make you weep to see the expression on their faces when I give it to them. I'm going over somewhat later in the day. If any of you want to come along, you're welcome.

FATHER: I am certain Christ will have a happy smile as the children receive your gift. (*Turns to GRANDFATHER.*) Now, it is your turn, Grandad.

GRANDFATHER: I have always been interested in helping other people to help themselves. (*Opens his package, holds up three checks in envelopes, ready for mailing.*) I know of no better way than to send a check to Dr. Frank Laubach's World Literacy Fund. And, another to our church college. And this one is for our mission work in India.

FATHER: I'm sure your checks will please the Christ, also, Grandad. (*Turns to PAM.*) Pam, what's in your package?

PAM: My best doll. Mother said I might, and she helped me to make new clothes for it. I'm going to give it to a little girl at the Ridge Home.

GEORGE: We have taken some things to the Ridge Home too. There are so many children there. Perhaps, two hundred of them have no one to come visit. You see, these children are

mentally retarded. It takes so little to please them. Even a nickel for the coke-vending machine will bring a glow of happiness to a child's face. We have asked the Wedding Ring Class to help us with this project. Two hundred children were more than we could do for—alone. More than that, we are going to try to make Christmas live during the rest of the year for these children. Not only do they need Christian friends now, but they need to know that people are interested in them all during the year. Mrs. ----- is sponsoring this project for us. She has taken a real interest in it.

ANN: You know, we can even be selfish in trying to build our own egotism at Christmastime by trying to do something really outstanding for others, so we can feel warm and comfortable inside our own hearts. It's more than that. Its got to be a day-by-day, week-by-week, month-by-month proposition.

GEORGE: (*Reaches out and takes her hand.*) You're right, Ann. I keep seeing our little Bill and Sis in such a home—with no one to love them. I do not like the thought of it. (*If a real family is used here, the children's own names may be used.*)

FATHER: Chuck, you're next. What is in your package? It is most mysterious appearing.

CHUCK: (*Opens package—holds up long, long sheet of paper.*) These are the names of the elderly people and children in ----- General Hospital who have no one to send them cards. Doc got the list of names for me. And believe me, it kept me busy addressing cards to all these people. And it took most of my month's allowance to buy the cards and stamps. I want you to know the cards all had pictures and verses in keeping with Christ's birthday too—none of these dog or cat cards for them.

FATHER: Mother, you must have an interesting package, also. Please show us what is in it.

MOTHER: (*Opens a beautifully wrapped package.*) This is a small beginning and a prayer of hope for a favorite project of mine. There are so many mentally disturbed people at the State Hospital. I feel they could find much comfort and healing in a prayer room all their own. I have a dream of people sending money to help provide these prayer rooms—one each in the men's and women's quarters. Mrs. ----- is sponsoring this project. My, but I do hope people will remember to send a check to her to help these ill people.

FATHER: I hope so too, Mother. There are so very many people who need Christ's love through all of us. (*Reaches beneath the tree and gives*)

(*Continued on page 30*)

We Get Ready for



CHRISTMAS



in Our House

by Cornelia C. Maris

"CHRISTMAS HAS BEEN made a time of money-making and festivities that have nothing to do with the real meaning of the day." This is the cry that we hear from so many each year. Most people do very little to help remedy the situation. Here is a solution that we think really helps put the whole Christmastide in its true perspective and makes our families know that it is the birthday of the Christ Child.

Even the tiny one in the family is thrilled when it is the day after Thanksgiving and we all begin to think about Christmas. Thanksgiving has always meant much to us because of our New England ancestors, so, until that religious holiday is over, we do very little talking about Christmas. So many of the families we know have done all their shopping early and our children are excited to begin to do something. We all work hard to get the home shining and ready for the first Sunday in Advent. Our Christmas celebration begins then. Guests may be invited, but the whole family shares these experiences together.

First of all the boxes of Christmas things are brought down from the attic to see what is left and what needs to be purchased this year. Of course new candles are on the top of the list... and maybe we will want to add a new animal or angel for our Christmas crèche. Everyone wants to go along to help. We buy one large candle for the Love Candle and four smaller candles, one for each week in Advent. Some people use colored candles, and others, white. We prefer the bright red ones for they make us think of Christmas as they glow each day.

We pick a place for our family worship center. It can't be too low, as exploring fingers may make away with our figures. Sometimes one of the children has found an animal during the year and has saved it as a surprise for our crèche. Sometimes we have strange little animals added that are favorites and must be used.

After all the figures are picked out, we place them where they will be handy when wanted and then we get our center prepared. Greens, candles in their star holders, and sometimes straw are all placed ready for our first Sunday in Advent.

When the right moment comes that first Sunday, we place the animals. We read together the story of the Annunciation and the Magnificat. This is perhaps a little difficult for the youngest to understand so we sing "Away in a Manger," then he, too, knows that we are getting ready for the "little Lord Jesus." We begin to learn, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," so

that it, too, will become a part of our Christmas. Just before the prayer someone lights the first Advent candle and in its soft light we know Christmas is coming.

Each week we add another figure or two. The shepherds, Mary, Joseph, the Wise Men start on their journey and at last the baby Jesus comes to join the rest of the figures. This is always the breathless moment on the Sunday before Christmas. Each Sunday another candle is lighted along with the one

—Three Lions



Families have different ways of preparing their hearts for Christmas. Each week preceding Christmas this family adds a figure or two to the crèche during the family worship service.

Each Sunday in Advent a candle is added until finally four candles and the Love Candle which burns on Christmas Day all shed their light in the home.

—Luoma Photos



from the week before until finally the four candles and the Love Candle which burns on Christmas Day all shed their light on our home.

We add carols the children love and have learned. We try to learn new carols each year. Sometimes we play part of the "Messiah" by Handel.

All of this takes away the commercialism that so many talk about and do so little about. Of course we have stores, we need them. It is their business to make money. It is our business as parents and homemakers to bring the spirit of the Christ Child into our homes.

This is how we usually plan our little services. I think it means much more if each family figures out its own way of doing things, but maybe our way will help you to make yours better and different.

First Sunday in Advent:

Sing: "Away in a Manger," No. 199¹ (Do this especially for the little ones.)

Read: The Annunciation and The Magnificat.

Sing: "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," No. 182. Light first candle.

Prayer: Dear Father, in this season of Christmas help us to make the spirit of the Christ Child live in all of us. Let us not forget that this is a birthday time, a happy time, and a lovely time.

Let us be kind and thoughtful and happy, and keep us near to Thee, we ask in His dear name's sake. Amen.

Second Sunday in Advent: (By light of first candle.)

Sing: "We Are the Angels" (for the little ones)

"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing," No. 189.

Read: The story of the shepherds

Sing: "Angels We Have Heard On High," No. 187. Light second candle.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, as the shepherds heard the angels and went to visit the baby Jesus, so we come this day to listen to thy words to us. We are so glad that we can sing and talk about the angels and shepherds and the baby Jesus. Help us to remember this year those who may not have as much as we. May they, too, hear the angel songs and know that thou art Love and dost care for them too. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Third Sunday in Advent: (light two candles)

Sing: "We Three Kings of Orient Are," No.

204. "We Are the Wisemen" (for little ones)

Read: Story of the Wise Men.

(Continued on page 30)

¹Hymn numbers refer to *Christian Worship—A Hymnal*.

Christmas in Action

by Beulah G. Squires

—Harold M. Lambert

WHEN THE CHRISTMAS DINNER is over and we gather in the living room a bit too stodgy for conversation but loath to say goodnight a Christmas game is in order that can be played by young and old.

It should be elastic enough to accommodate any size group from a small family group to a large church crowd. Such a game is Christmas in action.

Prepare slips of paper on which are written the following names: Santa Claus, Mrs. Santa Claus, mouse, sugar plums, wind, Jack Frost, little Imps, train, drum, wagon, doll buggy, toy soldiers, Jack-in-the-box, Mama doll, horn, and the well-known reindeer; Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donder, and Blitzen. If the group is a large one names may be duplicated.

The leader will distribute the slips, announcing that he is going to relate a narrative that will be dramatized by the ones in the room. When the name is called the one in the group will impersonate the name on his slip. For instance, Santa Claus might say, "Ho-Ho"; Mrs. Santa Claus could say, "Merry Christmas"; the wind could howl or whistle. Much originality will result. When plural names like toys or reindeer are called, all act at the same time. With drums beating, Mama dolls talking, and trains tooting, the fun will really begin. Failure to comply in some way will of course enact a forfeit.

When everyone understands, the leader tells the story with whatever variations he may care to introduce, pausing long enough after each object to give time for the impersonation. Keep in mind it is the impersonations not the continuity of the story that provides the entertainment.

The story: 'Twas the night before Christmas and no one was asleep. The mouse ---- by the chimney was waiting for cheese and the children were all drooling for sugar plums ----. At the North Pole the wind ---- was blowing a gale. Jack Frost ---- was nipping everyone's nose. The Imps ---- were sneaking around trying to hide in the sleigh. Mrs. Santa ---- was checking the toys ----. First the train ---- then the drum ---- the doll buggy ---- the toy soldiers ---- the horn ---- and the Jack-in-the-box ----.

When all were checked, Santa Claus ---- jumped in the sleigh and away they went. The reindeer ---- went fast and the wind ---- blew hard. Old Santa's nose was red like a cherry. He called to his rein-



deer ---- now Dasher ---- now Dancer ---- now Prancer ---- now Vixen ---- now Comet ---- now Cupid ---- now Donder ---- and Blitzen ---- and the reindeer ---- all doubled their speed.

Soon the chimneys were sighted and down each one went Old Santa Claus ----. He left Mama dolls ---- wagons ---- doll buggies ---- toy soldiers ---- trains ----. A little mouse ---- got frightened and the horns ---- scared the Imps ----, they jumped from the sleigh and were nevermore seen. The drum ---- made a noise that sounded like thunder which frightened the Reindeer ---- and made them run away. Old Santa ---- shouted and shouted but over the roof tops and across high steeples, they ran. Finally Old Santa ---- brought them to a halt and laughed like a jolly good fellow.

It was quite a night's work and the day was just breaking when Old Santa Claus ---- called to his reindeer ---- to take him home quickly.

Through the sky they dashed and when he got home Mrs. Santa ---- was waiting with Jack Frost ---- by her side. The reindeer were tired and Old Santa ---- was sleepy so Mrs. Santa ---- tucked him in bed and that is the end of the tale for this year.



This modern angel is made of nylon net (\$.59 per yard, 54 inches wide). Material is stretched around a stiff paper cone to form skirt; top, arms, and wings were cut to suit creator's fancy; wings and skirt are edged with fluff from dime store. Beads and buttons came from same place. Head is a Christmas ball, silver with features inked on.

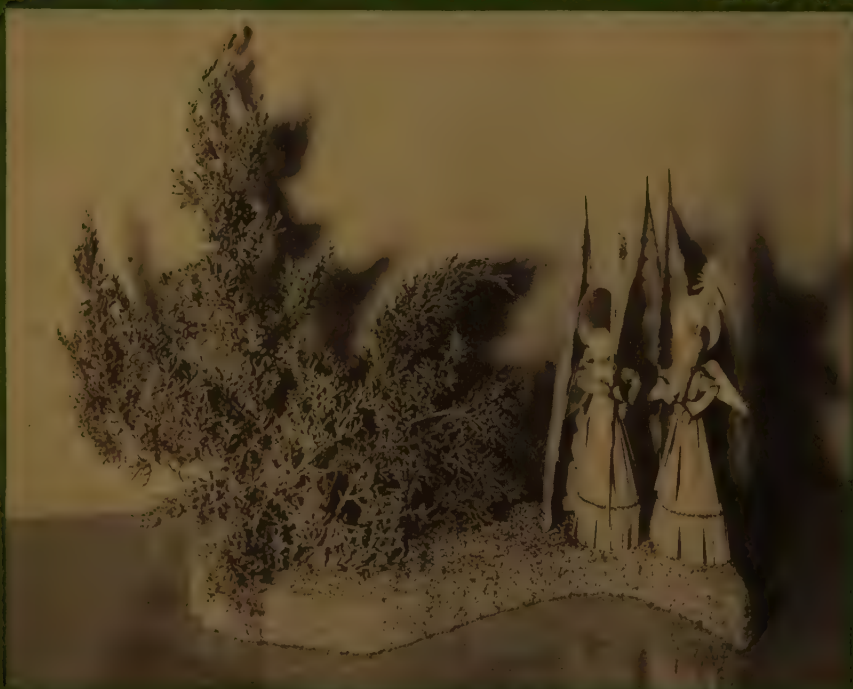
Happy Family Christmastime!

by Louise Price Bell

Of all times of the year Christmas is the time when the entire family should have a very happy time together. The most important thing about Christmas is, of course, its origin, and children should be very conscious of this and feel that it is far more important than gift-giving. As God gave Jesus to the world, so youngsters can be reared to connect the gift-giving to those they love—to sense that giving is far more blessed than receiving.

The young people should be encouraged to wrap their own gifts, help in the making of Christmas goodies, in decorating the home to give it a festive air. The tiny tots will need to be helped at first but by the time they reach the teen-age level they will be pretty expert. Grandparents should be an integral part of the Big Day and fortunate are the children who have four. Whether they have only one or the full quota of four, include them in the churchgoing, the gift distributing, the dinner, for such events are very important to older people.

—photos from the author



This simple decoration is made of a free form piece of styrofoam sprayed with gilt glitter dust, three sprays of spruce from a tree on the home grounds, and two straw dolls that were brought home from a trip to Old Mexico; yet, it is very effective on a small table. (The styrofoam could be sprayed with gilt, then sprinkled with sparkle dust while still moist.)



Three cherubs stand in front of a large tree made from styrofoam and edged with tinsel which glitters in the spotlight that floods the scene. Base upon which figures stand is also styrofoam.



Here is a very inexpensive Yuletide decoration that the children can make and which is very effective. Just cut giant "snowflakes" from gold, silver, red, or green paper—using the type with a sheen on the surface—and arrange in this way over sofa, attaching to wall with masking tape, raw egg-white, or Scotch tape. Then attach a Christmas tree ball of contrasting color, in the center of the pattern. Patterns can be used year after year, perhaps over fireplace or table. For an additional touch, if your coffee table has a glass top, slip matching "snowflake" under glass, as shown here.



Worship in the Family with Children

To Use with Younger Children

I Like Christmas!

Theme for December:

I Think About Christmas

A Bible Verse

And they...found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

Luke 2:16

A Word to Parents

The materials on this page and on the next two pages are for your use in moments of worship with your children. If you have a family worship service daily in your home, some of the materials here may be used at that time. If you use *The Secret Place*, you may find that some of the materials fit into the meditations in that booklet.

—Religious News Service



It was near Christmas and Patty was excited! Mother and Patty went to the store and bought a beautiful Christmas wreath. Every time the postman came, he brought more letters and cards...

"I like Christmas!" Patty said as she looked at the pictures on some Christmas cards.

"I do, too," Mother said.

"Why?" Patty asked.

"Because it is Jesus' birthday," Mother answered.

Just then Daddy came home, and the family ate dinner. When they were through, Daddy got the ladder and a hammer and hung the Christmas wreath over the mantel.

"How does it look, Patty?" Daddy asked.

"Fine, Daddy!" Patty answered. "Why do we hang a wreath?"

"To make our home look pretty at Christmas. That is one way we can show that we are glad for Jesus' birthday," Daddy said.

"How do we know it is Jesus' birthday?" Patty asked.

Daddy took the Bible and sat down. Patty climbed up on his lap. Daddy opened the Bible, put his finger on the words and read:

"Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."

Daddy closed the Bible. "That was the first Christmas," he said.

Patty smiled and said, "I'm glad for Christmas!"

"I am, too," Daddy said.

To Use with Older Children

A Christmas Song

The song printed on this page is sung over and over at Christmas. You probably know the story of how a young minister of a small Austrian church wrote the hymn. He had been a guest at a Christmas play. On the way home, the beautiful night led him to write a poem about the Christmas story. The next morning, the minister took his verses to the organist and asked him to set them to music. By night he had finished, and the song was sung at the church on Christmas Eve.

This hymn is loved and sung by people everywhere at the Christmas season.



—Woodward

Read the verses that Pastor Mohr wrote. Think of what each word means. Then sing the verses, either aloud or in your own mind. Look at the picture above the hymn. Try to imagine yourself out in the field with the shepherds on that first Christmas night. What would you have thought? How do you think you would have felt? Do you ever have that kind of feeling when you sing this, or any other, Christmas carol?

This Christmas, think of the words of all the carols you sing at Christmas. As you do this, you will have a better Christmas.

Silent Night, Holy Night

STILLE NACHT. Irregular

1. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, All is calm, all is bright;
2. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Dark-ness flies, all is light;
3. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Son of God, love's pure light;
4. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, Won-drous Star, lend thy light;

Round you Vir - gin Moth-er and Child! Ho - ly In - fant, so ten-der and mild,
Shep-herds hear the an - gels sing, "Al - le - lu - ia! hail the King!
Ra - diant beams from Thy ho - ly face, With the dawn of re - deem-ing grace,
With the an - gels let us sing, Al - le - lu - ia to our King;

Sleep in heav-en - ly peace, Sleep in heav-en - ly peace.
Christ the Sav-iour is born, Christ the Sav-iour is born."
Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth.
Christ the Sav-iour is born, Christ the Sav-iour is born. A - MEN.

For Family Worship

Worship Center: If your family enjoys having and using a beauty or worship center in your home to help the members to worship, it will be easy to arrange for this month's theme. If you have not yet introduced a worship center into your home, you may wish to try it this month. A small table, a wide window ledge, a low chest of drawers would serve. If you have young children in the family, the center should be low enough so that they can see and enjoy the objects on it. Figures for a crèche, Christmas greens, a Christmas candle, an arrangement of ornaments, with the Bible open to one of the accounts of the Christmas story, would be sufficient.

Call to Worship:

"Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among men with whom he is
pleased!"
—Luke 2:14.

Song: Use the song printed on page 19 or choose from the following ones found in the primary pupils' books: "The Sleep of the Baby Jesus," year one, fall quarter, page 39; "The Snow Lay on the Ground," year two, fall, page 31; "Away in a Manger," year two, fall, page 34; "What Can I Give Him?" year three, fall, page 41.

Poem: Use the poem printed on this page or choose from these found in the primary pupils' books: "A Christmas Carol," year one, fall, page 35; "Christmas," year two, page 42; "Christmas Joy," year two, page 43.

—A. Devaney, Inc., N.Y.



Story: If you have young children in your family, you may use the story on page 18. If your children are older, choose from the following stories in the primary pupils' books: "The First Christmas," year one, fall, page 33; "Visitors from Afar," year one, fall, page 40; "The Angels' Song," year two, fall, page 33; "The Picture the Shepherds Saw," year two, fall, page 35; "Gifts for the Child Jesus," year two, fall, page 37; "What the Shepherds Heard and Saw," year three, fall, page 34.

Song: Choose another song from the suggested list.

Meditation: Plan your own meditation based upon the "Call to Worship," the poem or story you will use, upon some of your family Christmas traditions, upon the religious significance to be seen in the exchange of friendly greetings and of loving gifts made at Christmastime, upon your favorite passage of scripture related to the Christmas story, or use "The Message of the Stars," junior pupil's book, year one, fall, page 44.

Prayer: If one of your children received a pet for a Christmas gift, you may wish to use the prayer printed on this page or adapt it to the kind of pet received. If not, you may pray your own prayer or use the one printed here: Dear God, we are glad for the spirit of loving and giving that we feel at Christmas. We are glad, too, for the beauty and joy of the season. May all of this remind us of your good gift of Jesus. Amen.

What Child Is This?

What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?

This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary.

—William C. Dix



Prayer for a Christmas Gift

Dear God, a pony is such fun. He is so strong and lively, and gentle, too. Help us to remember that he may get tired, just as we do. Help us not to make him carry too heavy loads or go too fast. Help us to make sure that he has food and water, and time to rest. Help us always to be kind to him. Amen.

—Frances Bourne Taft

The Green Buttons

by Mary Savage

"What really caught our fancy was a string of little green glass buttons."

—Norm Hancock



AUNT LUDIE WAS my grandmother's cook. She was the nicest, dearest, and jolliest old Negro lady in the whole world. She made the best cookies! Mmmmm. It makes me hungry just to think of them. Best of all, she told us such wonderful stories.

One day when my brother and I were visiting Grandmother, Aunt Ludie showed us her "Memory Box." In it we found many odd and interesting things, such as old beads, a silver thimble, an old compact, one earring, an empty rouge box, a button hook, a broken doll head, and many, many other strange and wonderful things. What really caught our fancy was a string of little green glass buttons. They seemed almost to wink as we looked at them. When I asked Aunt Ludie about them, she nodded her head and smiled.

"Sure now, I might have known that you would like those little glass buttons. You children sit down here on my footstool and I will tell you about the little green buttons.

"The first thing you must remember is this. Everybody has a secret happy place in his heart and that's mostly what my story

is about.

"Judy was a little girl that lived across the street from me when I was about your size. She was my best friend, and I was her best friend. We had some fine times together. We played with paper dolls. We had tea parties; and sometimes we dressed up in our Mother's clothes and pretended we were grown up. I'll tell you, that little secret happy place in our hearts was just full to the brim nearly all the time.

"It was getting close to Christmastime and everybody was hustling and bustling around and hiding presents from everybody else. Judy and I were pretty excited! We'd been looking around at all the nice things in the stores and we had made lists as long as our arms. We wrote down all the things we wanted for Christmas. We could hardly wait until Christmas morning! Well, it finally did come, and I got up real early and ran to see what was under the tree. Right away I saw a big doll. She was wearing the prettiest dress I ever had seen in my life. Then, I almost lost my breath, because hanging right there on the Christmas tree was another dress just like it, but this one would fit

me. The dresses were a nice soft brown color and sewed all around the yoke, just below the collar, were these little green buttons.

"I put my new dress on, grabbed my new doll and ran to show Judy. I met her at my front door and what do you think? She had a new doll, and a new dress; but here is the very best part, *our dresses were just alike!* We were the happiest little girls in town.

"We wore our look-alike dresses until they were nothing but rags. Then we cut off these little green buttons and saved them. You see we liked our dresses so very much that our secret happy place was just full of gladness. In fact, that happy place was so full that we forgot all about the long list we had made before Christmas.

"Sometimes, when I get to feeling sorry for myself, I just look at these little green buttons. The first thing I know, I'm happy again. No, I don't believe the gladness will ever wear off of these little buttons."

Aunt Ludie was right. It really doesn't take much to make folks happy. Sometimes, just little things like little green buttons can fill their secret happy place right up to the top.



Should Families Worship Together?

SO MUCH OF WHAT WE FEEL and believe is tied in some way to experiences of childhood, memories of home and parents. To this day I remember the warm-soft-cushionery dust on my bare feet as I walked down a lane on our farm. This lane led from the pasture just outside the barn to the lower fields into which our milk cows were turned after they had been milked at night. It was my job to follow the slow-moving cows to this field and fasten a gate behind the last, tail-switching laggard. This was my special job and it was special because my father had put his hard, brown hand on my shoulder and had said, "Honey, you're big enough now to take your share in our chores. Filling the kitchen woodbox is a child's job. But you are almost ready for school and I think you're able to take on an adult's job." To my six-year-old mind, this assumed vast proportions and I finally concluded that Daddy could not

possibly do his evening chores without my contribution. I was part of the adult world of my family.

Today I do not remember any cold or wet or otherwise distasteful trips down this dusty lane. I do not remember being unhappy at always being committed to do this job. My mind has been wiped clean of unpleasant memories and I recall only the happy times. This is the pleasure and prerogative of remembered childhood.

Just as I was part and parcel of work and responsibility on the farm so I was part of the family worship. I recall Daddy's favorite songs and Bible passages to this day. They were not personally meaningful to me at five or six or even ten. They held a vicarious meaning for me, for I knew they were dear to someone who held my world in his arms. When we went to the small country school, which on Sundays was the community church, I did not know what

The author raises a very basic question. What is your answer?

the minister was saying most of the time. Yes, I was bored I'm sure and many would say, "Children should never be bored in church. If they are, it is not a meaningful experience and their young minds should be spared this unrelated experience."

Let me add quickly that while the words spoken bored me, the sense of being a part of something important, of watching something happen in the adult world was very much a part of my feeling. I could not verbalize on it. I could not tell you how I felt about its importance or relevance to my world. However, I did know that I was a part of my father's world and that he listened and responded with nodding head, quick smile or frown. I wanted to know what made him respond like this. We might have discussed this on the way home. Again, I do not remember the words—only the smile and frown, but God became real to me because he was real to my father. The scene of worship was, I am sure, not inspiring, for in later years I returned to the school and found it dark and dirty with deeply initialed seats, ink-stained and scarred, either too large or too small for comfort. The blackboards were dirty, the teacher's desk took up one corner of the room and, instead of a dramatic baptistry or lighted picture of Christ, there was a dark, crookedly hung picture of "A Mother Feeding Her Birds."

I had remembered none of this. What I did remember was sunshine on my father's folded hands and bowed head. I remembered the blue windflowers and Johnny-jump-ups I had picked on my way to church and my distress when they lay in a limp, unsightly heap on the desk. After church Daddy would console me by saying, "Don't cry. God planned it that way. The flowers will live and bloom in the earth but they will die when they are separated from their roots. They will add color and fragrance to their world but they cannot live without roots."

"You mean the ugly part of them in the ground is what makes them grow, Daddy?"

"Yes, their roots may not be as important to you as are the blossoms on top, but without them the flowers can not live."

The next Sunday when I stopped to gather the flowers, I carefully pulled them root and all, from the soil. Once more they lay on the desk in the bright sun and once more they died.

In answer to my accusing, "I thought you said that they would grow if they had their roots left on," my father explained more fully about how flowers developed and grew.

Of course, I do not remember any of the discussion verbatim. What I do remember is the experience and the vague knowledge that roots were essential to all growing things and that the roots had to be planted in the earth and nourished by the sun, wind, rain,

and soil. I'm sure Daddy gave me a practical farmer's explanation concerning roots and soil and the end result of all this process of nature. I know it ended with my planting a peach seed that Sunday afternoon and the long, long days I watched for it to grow. It ended with Daddy telling me the story in the Bible about planting seeds in the right kind of ground. This was a story a farmer would understand. This was an experience I was to remember at various times of my life, always with a sense of love and gratitude and new appreciation for the wisdom of my father and the Bible.

The experiences I remember from childhood are usually specific but they all revolve about these intangibles: I knew I was a part of my family's work and world and I knew I was needed. I assume my basic needs of love and security and acceptance were met. Perhaps Mother wondered if I was ever bored but I feel she would have been surprised at my lack of imagination if I had been. I know we faced the world as a family and this world was not partitioned into age-level groups on all areas of endeavor.

All of these past experiences color my evaluation of church and family today. I do not mean to suggest that "what was good for our fathers is good enough for us." I do think we should consider the fundamentals of family living and relate them to the church but not try to duplicate experiences.

In our specialized world we have departments for this and special teachers for that, but seldom is there a place for the family as a unit to worship, work, or play together. The crisis in religion today is the eroding away of the Christian family, the diminishing away of love. This applies to the family of God as well as the named and specific family units. The worship of adults cannot be satisfactorily done apart from the church. Children cannot worship alone or apart from either the church or the family. Children need to feel they are a part of a wider, more important experience than that to be found in expanded sessions, with the church baby sitter, or in junior church. Beware lest the children experience a junior god, unrelated to the Creator of Life!

It is well to remember that the New Testament church began as family groups seeking to understand the divine revelation of God. This revelation was God in Christ reconciling the world unto him. This is the reincarnation, the theological issue, the root in the soil which sustained and nourished the early church. These early families did not participate as individuals apart from the family. They came by households and were frequently named by households: "The household of Aristobulus," "Narcissus' household, who are Christians" and Cornelius, "A devout man who feared God with all his household."

These early Christians were not equal in their

understanding of this divine revelation of God. They participated in corporate worship each at his own level. They shared a common experience but for each it was unique and individual. In their corporate worship they inspired, instructed and sustained the weaker, younger, and less comprehending members of the church family.

Our worship today must go beyond our personal satisfaction. We come to church to be inspired, but we must also seek to inspire. This is a two-way street. Do the children in the service distract you? Are you irritated when they play ticktacktoe or make small cups out of chewing gum wrappers? What do the children think of the whispered adult conversations, the wandering, calculating glances, or the letter writing which takes place in church because, I presume, the adult is too busy to do it elsewhere? Can you adults both teach and learn from the children in your pews?

Recently a new family moved into our community. The five-year-old son, Larry, came to church for the first time and sat just behind me. He ran his foot up and down my seat back, he carefully felt the fur on my coat, and breathed a damp, bubble gum breath on my neck. The music began, the choir filed in, the minister and the associate minister entered. Larry watched all this parading with expectation. The choir finished the processional and all the people were seated. All that is but Larry, who said in an audible voice filled with disappointment, "When is God coming out?"

When is God coming out? That depends on those who comprise the household of God. We who are members of this household speak so glibly about the church and God but think and act so shallowly! There is a love beyond self-love and family love and this love is taught and sustained by the church.

Our worship often reflects what we are. If we are

for "Should Families Worship Together?"

Study Guide



This study concerns itself with the question, "Should Families Worship Together?" Is this important or even desirable from the standpoint of the contemporary church?

1. The leader—lay person, minister, or educational director—can involve the members of the group by asking casually what each of them recalls of his church attendance as a child, possibly six or eight years old. This should be brief as more than one person should contribute. The leader may plan to tell some experience that stands out in his mind and in this way indicates what is desirable for the discussion.

These related experiences should be relevant. Perhaps the leader could say that one of the ways we can understand and evaluate children and their learning process is to think back to incidents in our childhood and recall what made them memorable. This will show why we acquired or failed to acquire certain ideals.

Related to this discussion is the aim of religious education to help children retain and develop their natural powers of religious perception.

2. When did each of the group feel closest to God? Why? If this closeness is a part of their childhood, why did they lose it?

The leader must see that the memories of the group are relevant to the discussion! He can interrupt at some point of the discussion to say, "Do you over

have the feeling of expectancy which the child had who asked, 'When is God coming out?' Is this feeling possible only for an uncomprehending child?"

Is it possible for a worship service to create the feeling that God is waiting for us as communicants of all ages? The children in the service are a part of the contemporary world. They are also a part of the future. How can those who are a part of the past contribute in teaching or guiding these children?

3. Why did the church begin offering expanded sessions or junior church? Did this do away, from the standpoint of education, with the need or even the desirability of children participating in adult worship?

In the beginning the New Testament church was a family affair. The breaking of bread and the common meal were acts of worship. The hospitality of the open door was an act of worship. Paul was passed from house to house and his bread-and-butter notes are included in the *Letters*. Do you suppose, when the household of Cornelius was to become a part of the church, that Cornelius asked himself if his children would understand or be bored with the service? His concerns were more fundamental than that. His concerns were for life itself. His commitment involved not only his life but the lives of his household, servants and relatives alike.

4. One of the reasons given for lack

of interest in the church is this. "I went to church every Sunday, rain or shine, with my family when I was a child. However, as I grew older I found that the people as a rule just repeated the teachings of Christ but were never committed to them." Or the high school girl in revolt against all authority who says casually to her minister, "Oh, yes, I know Christ but I don't get very excited about him." Is the church to blame for these attitudes? Is the family or the individual to blame?

5. Will church attendance offer some guarantee of future happiness or protection for its members? Is this even the aim of the church?

Here the group could discuss what they believe to be the aims of the church. Mary Alice Jones suggests the aim to be this: "To help children identify the will and revelation of God." Or perhaps the purpose of the church is to help all people acknowledge God as the ground of all being. After the purpose of the church has been discussed ask the question: "Who are eligible teachers of this purpose?" Aside from specific names these people may be mentioned and discussed:

- a. People who give illustration of the truth or who have lived and become an experiment of truth. (This involves recall or memories of people who have influenced the lives of the people in the discussion group. Let's keep the memories relevant!)
- b. People with a high purpose. These are not the same as the first group. People with a high purpose do not always succeed. People with a high purpose often live brief lives. Examples: Stephen, Diedrich Bonhoeffer.
- c. People who laborously learn the techniques of teaching. Is there such a thing as an inactive teacher?

6. The study group can profitably discuss
(Continued on page 28)

impatient, cynical, a status seeker or at best a casually committed Christian then here is our level of worship.

These attitudes of worship we pass on to the children in our pews. Nor can we escape the need for teaching by placing the children in the nursery or expanded sessions of our churches. Worship must not be selfish and self-seeking. "I came that ye might have life" . . . not just sustenance but abundance in life. No one can teach this abundance better than parents who worship with their children or who accept children other than their own to worship with them.

A child will "see God come out" as he hears the organ or listens to the reading from Isaiah, "I saw the LORD . . . high, and lifted up." If he has questions to ask about this wonderful reading and his parents have heard it read, there is the beginning of learning on a more mature level. It is not neces-

sary, possible, or even desirable that past experience be repeated in exact detail. It is important that the underlying principle of learning be repeated in each generation. Just as you learned from and with your parents, so it is desirable for you to move from the child's position you once held into the place your parents held for you.

Of course, a child will be taught the message of the church in the graded church sessions. The children will be placed in groups much like the public school groupings and will be taught with the same techniques of teaching. They will learn and will come home to answer Mother's question, "What did you learn at church school today?" with an acceptable answer. Their church school participation will be an unrelated experience except for the telling. Together the family members, the ancient household of God, will enter the pew together, worship each on

(Continued on page 30)

BIBLEGRAM

by Hilda E. Allen

Guess the words defined below and write them over their numbered dashes. Then transfer each letter to the correspondingly numbered square in the pattern. The colored squares indicate word endings.

Reading from left to right, you will find that the filled pattern will contain a selected quotation from the Bible.

A An ache to take to the dentist	46 15 40 34 22
B Crower in the poultry yard	6 29 67 9 1 48 30
C Kind of drum beaten with the hands	43 60 33 14 72 54
D To store up or put away, as money	51 25 96 38
E The Buckeye State	108 44 32 12
F Hard to cut, like some steaks	36 61 81 10 52
G Stockings	37 18 70 106
H Stairs from one landing to the next	87 42 26 59 2 56
I Still, or hushed	80 73 99 20 84
J On the inside	21 55 90 31 8 68
K Hard-shelled reptile that can draw its head, legs and tail into its shell	16 41 89 63 85 3
L Something for a horseback rider	39 65 7 13 4 49
M It is used with an eye to fasten something	64 11 35 50

N Sudden burst of light	28 95 94 47 17
O Place where panes are used	24 57 101 62 5 76
P The sum of all	79 23 98 77 107
Q The clenched hand	103 78 19 27
R What to do at target practice	58 71 100 88 66
S Lumps of ice falling during a thunder storm	105 45 82 74
T One of a forest	104 109 69 83
U Dug in the garden	91 102 92 110
V North Carolina State flower	75 97 53 93 86

(Solution on page 30)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63
64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82
84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92
93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101
	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	

A Novel Plan for Christmas

by Loie Brandom

ALTHOUGH CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES usually are confined to the joyousness of family reunions, those far from home and relatives need not be cheated out of Christmas enjoyment, if some foresight and planning are brought into play.

One group of such aloners decided to do something about it, and were so successful in carrying out the following plans they gladly pass the results of their experiment on to others in the same situation.

The couple which happened to have the largest home offered its use for the occasion and suggested they furnish the Christmas tree, the hot rolls and coffee. Another couple brought the turkey and dressing, all cooked and just needing a bit of warming up in the oven. The other couples brought the vegetables, cranberries, relishes, salad, and dessert, after carefully tabulating what each should bring so there would be no duplications.

A woman, paid with money contributed by the parents, took complete charge of the children, feeding, napping, and amusing them in the playroom during the entire party.

The guests were seated at one long table decorated in red, white, and green. Polished red apples were hollowed out enough to hold green candles, and red ribbon streamers extended from flat sprays of evergreens in the center of the table to the white place cards at each plate.

Having all the guests seated at

one table made it possible to introduce games which could be played between courses, and the following ones are some of those they enjoyed. Each lady had been asked beforehand to come prepared with one or more suggestions for entertaining, so there was no hesitation when the time came for these interludes.

Santa's Guess. One was chosen to be leader, or Santa, and was handed a quarter. The other players put their hands under the table. Santa passed the quarter to the player on her right—or on her left—and then placed her own hands upon the table in plain sight. The others passed the quarter back and forth from hand to hand under the table until the leader called, "It's Santa's Guess." At this call all the players brought their hands, doubled into fists, into sight placing them palms downward on the table. Santa then tried to guess what hand was concealing the quarter. When she failed, the quarter was again put in circulation and she had another guess. If she was correct in her guessing, the one having the quarter then became the Santa.

Christmas Gifts. The leader of this game remarked, "For a Christmas gift I asked for a silver spoon," or some article which, without leaving her seat she could touch with her hand, for example; tablecloth, plate, napkin, cup, string of pearls, or other wearing apparel. The player on her right then named something that she

could touch, and so on. No article could be named twice, so after a few rounds of the table the search for unnamed articles within reach became quite exciting. The one who was first to give up in this game had to furnish some form of entertainment for the others, either with a dinner speech, reading, song, story, conundrum, or by starting some other appropriate game.

I Wanted. The leader began by mentioning a gift which she wanted, the name of which began with the letter A. She then turned to the one seated on her left and asked, "What do you think Santa brought me?" The one addressed replied by guessing an article beginning with A. For example: "I wanted an airplane for Christmas. What did I get?" The answer was, "You got acorns, apples, an antelope, accordion, an Airedale, an anchovy." The next player stated, "I wanted a Buick for Christmas. What did I get?" The player addressed answered, "Birds, baboons, bootees, and bel-fry bats." "I wanted china for Christmas. What did I get?" asked the following player. The reply, "Crackers, cold cream, crickets, and chilblains." "I wanted a diamond. What did I receive?" "Doughnuts, dates, daisies, and a duck." In this way the play went twice around the table, letting those make the statements, this time, who had furnished the answers the first round.

The Christmas Turkey. One guest had furnished the following

ball at some player in the circle who caught it and threw it to some other player, at the same time uttering a plaintive "baa-baa-baa," before the shepherd could touch the one who held the ball. If the shepherd caught anyone touching the ball, or any player to whom the ball was thrown forgot to say baa-baa-baa, then that player exchanged places with the shepherd.

The last game that kept them on the move was the following. Objects were placed about the room such as a pumpkin, a pint jar of dry beans, a stalk of celery, a dish of uncooked cranberries, an ear of corn, and an apple. The objects bore numbers which corresponded to numbered questions on slips of paper handed the players.

The questions were like the following.

1. How many inches around the pumpkin?
2. How many beans in the jar?
3. How many inches in the longest celery stalk?
4. How many rows of corn on the ear?
5. How many cranberries in the dish?
6. How many seeds in an apple?

And so the game goes on according to the objects on display.

A chocolate Santa Claus was awarded the contestant having the nearest correct answers.

It was a most delightful occasion for all those present and will, no doubt, have many return performances.

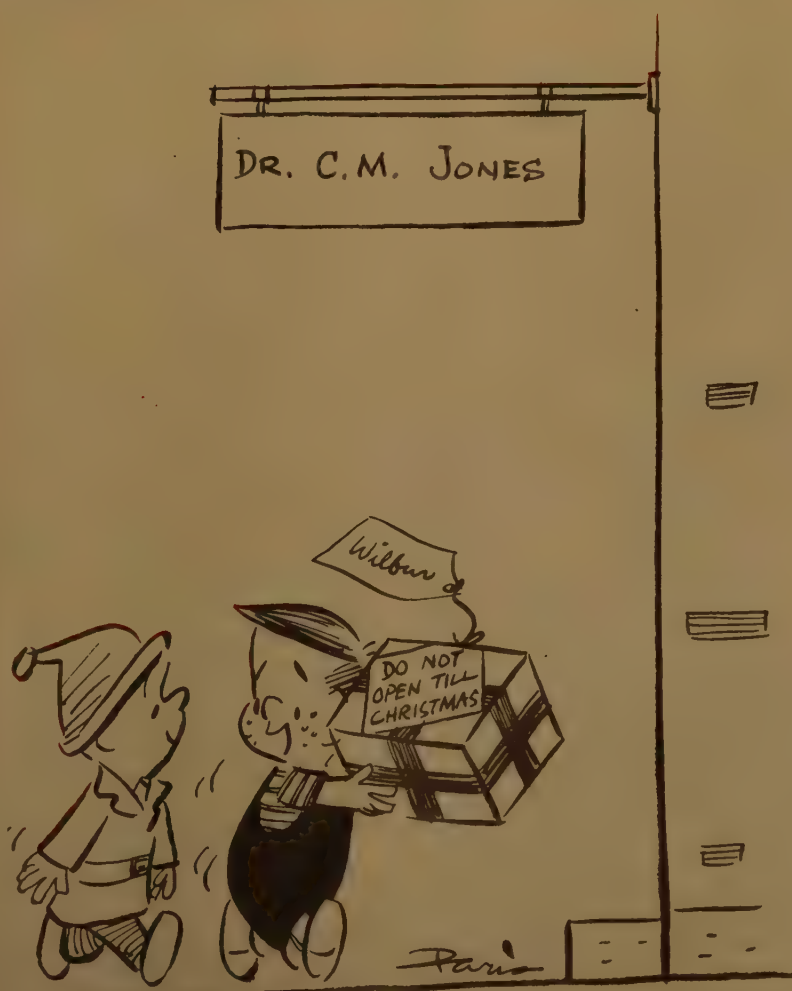
guessing game. She had written riddles on slips of paper and handed one slip to each one at the table, who took turns reading them aloud for the others to guess. The answers given are in parenthesis.

1. What part of the turkey opens the front door? (key)
2. What part tells a story? (tail-tale)
3. What part is used in a band? (drumsticks)
4. What does a dressmaker do to a turkey? (bastes it)
5. Why does a turkey remind one of a small boy after Christmas dinner? (both are stuffed)
6. What is the most disagreeable part of the turkey? (the bill)
7. What part is contained in a sentence? (claws-clause)
8. How do you know the turkey is wise? (He is never a goose)
9. What part is oriental? (Turk)
10. When being cooked what country is it in? (Greece)
11. Give five reasons why a turkey might be sad. (He gets it in the neck, is given a roasting, is cut up, everyone picks on him, and at last he is in the soup.)

After leaving the table a livelier game helped them feel more comfortable after the big dinner. This one they liked.

The Shepherd Watched His Sheep. The players formed a circle with a shepherd in the center. The shepherd was provided with a soft rubber ball. To start the game the shepherd threw the

Wilbur



"I sure hope he'll let us use his X-ray machine."

Take Time for Christmas

(Continued from page 4)

comes that they want to go shopping for their gifts, a good example will guide them best. Through your own attitude, help them to realize that gifts do not need to cost much money in order to make people happy, but that thoughtfulness in planning a gift that the person can use or enjoy is the best way to express one's love.

You may want to plan for a family gift you can give as your special Christmas project this year. It might be sharing your own Christmas with a foreign student, or sending a CARE package to a family in a part of the world where such help is needed, or making Christmas cookies for a Children's Home. Whatever it is, begin early to plan for it and find ways to let each one help in the preparations.

No doubt you will want to decorate your home. Talk over the possible ways you could do it, and plan together. Perhaps you will consider using window transparencies of the Christmas story, or of candles or stars, in at least one or two prominent windows. Your creative primary- and junior-age children may have had experience making these at school or at church, or perhaps in preparing murals using fingerpaints, crayons, or spatter printing. If so, they may take over the responsibility of helping the family make such decorations. Creative art of this kind has many and varied uses in decorating for Christmas. It can add greatly to a special center for family worship at Christmastime. It can be used to decorate windows or walls, to make Christmas greetings and wrapping papers. Ornaments for the tree made from foil, nuts, cranberries, popcorn, and many other easily available materials will add to the fun, and even the children who are under school age can help with them. If you need ideas or directions, you will find a variety in *Here's How and When*, by Keiser,¹ published by the Friendship Press or *Activities in Childhood Education*,¹ by Lobingier, published by the Pilgrim Press.

An outdoor Christmas tree for the birds, decorated with berries, seeds, suet, peanut butter, apples, and popcorn, is a good family project also, if you are in a neighborhood where it is practical.

Reading the Christmas story from the Bible, enjoying other Christmas stories together such as "Why the Chimes Rang" and "The Shepherd Who Did Not Go," watching good Christmas programs on television, and both singing carols and listening to recorded Christmas music, can contribute richly to a meaningful, Christian family Christmas. Some families have a special Christmas Eve family worship around the tree, singing carols by candlelight, reading the Christmas story from the Bible, and

praying a special prayer which they have prepared themselves. Others sing carols early in the morning as they gather around their tree to enjoy their gifts. Build up your own family customs to follow from year to year, and you will find the Christmas celebration meaning more and more to your family.

Surely you will want to plan to enjoy and share in the Christmas events at your church as a family. Perhaps there is a special family Christmas party to go to. There may be caroling for shut-ins in which you can join. There almost certainly will be special music in the Christmas Sunday services, and sometimes drama also. The church school sessions all through December will be full of activity which your children should not miss.

If you begin early and plan carefully, there will be time for the things you most want to do. Take time for Christmas this year, and at the close of Christmas Day feel in your home the presence of the Christ Child, the peace and good will that his coming brings.

I'll Be Home for Christmas

(Continued from page 6)

December

Dearest Mother—

Whew! Am I beat. But it's not a tired kind of tiredness, if you know what I mean. Just finished baking gingerman cookies . . . Nicky helped. He does the decorating, and does not confine himself to cookies only!

You should see our little tree! It stands by the window, the small stool beside it. It looks like a miniature setting of Christmas at your house! I've had to put the ornaments up in the top of the tree . . . Nicky has broken so many. And I want at least two left so I can start a collection like you did, and add to them through the years.

I'm giving Barry that hi-fi set he's been longing for . . . can't wait to see his face light up! Now my sugar bowl is empty, but my 'cup runneth over' and we're both sipping from the saucer.

Do you know what he did last night? He handed me his Christmas bonus check, saying, "Honey, I won't be able to get off, but I want you and Nicky to go home on this."

I squeezed him real hard, Mother, until my arms hurt. Then I told him I am home, and if I went to Dallas, what would happen to my family . . . to the Christmas spirit that's here in this room . . . a spirit that's so real we can almost hold it and rub it between our fingers. . . .

He didn't even answer. He just placed his big hands around my head and pulled me against him. He sure has changed; he's so understanding lately!

And I know you'll understand when I say, "I'll be home for Christmas."

God bless you, and a Merry Christmas to all!

Good-bye Mother,
Holly

Study Guide

(Continued from page 24)

cuss ways the present worship service can be made more meaningful to children. Can the children learn in class or at home the order of worship and why it is used? The words of choral responses, or the Doxology can be used at home as part of the family worship. The practice of using a "Hymn of the Month" helps families learn new hymns. This is very helpful to younger children.

How else can the present service be explained or clarified for children?

Would it be conceivable in your church to have a brief sermon for children and then excuse them from the rest of the service?

Could your church plan a monthly mid-morning family service where the families are specifically urged to attend church as a family? Could the order of worship or bulletin used for this service be distributed in advance so that parents could study and explain it to the younger children? This family service could precede church school and the regularly scheduled eleven o'clock service.

7. The group has discussed ways of evaluating and enriching family worship. Now is a good time to contrast family worship, both occasionally and regularly, with the program of junior church or expanded sessions. Perhaps the leader could introduce this contrast by saying, "We have spent some time in looking back and comparing past experiences with present practices. Let's talk about the contrasting values of junior church and family worship. How do you think junior church meets the needs of children? In what way is this helpful to the family unit?"

Resource Books:

Schulz, Charles M., *Young Pillars*. Anderson, Indiana: Warner Press, \$1.00.

Carrier, Blanche, *Free to Grow*. New York: Harper and Bros., \$3.00.

Chaplin, Dora, *Children and Religion*. New York: Charles Scribners, \$3.50.

Underhill, Evelyn, *Worship*. New York: Harper and Bros., cloth \$4.00, paper \$1.75.

Sweet, Herman, *Opening the Door for God*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, \$1.50.

Winter, Gibson, *Love and Conflict*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday, \$3.50.

Fox, H. W., *The Child's Approach to Religion*. New York: Harper and Bros., \$1.50.

¹Available from the publishers of this magazine.



Family Counselor

Q MY FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD boy spends a lot of time with a neighbor boy of seventeen who is always working on car motors. This is quite a fascination and seems to dominate the thoughts and dreams of when he will be sixteen and can drive.

The objection is that the older boy talks as they work about being in jail for speeding in Florida, getting drunk on New Year's, police fixing tickets.

My son has always been a good worker—serves a local paper once a week, shovels snow, cuts lawns, and puts all the money he makes in the bank. He is a very good athlete—belongs to several swimming clubs, and goes out for track, home-room basketball, and cross-country—but several times has missed practices of all these sports because this older boy is “pulling out a motor” and wants help.

Last year he missed track practice so much he was told to turn in his uniform. Now he tells me the coach wants him out this year but he doesn't want to go. I am trying to make him—to prove he can be relied upon and also to keep him busy.

My son still keeps in with his own age—goes to school football and basketball games and Saturday night canteen. In fact, he is very popular. Also, he seems to enjoy Sunday church school and participates in the Bible session. We all go together every Sunday. This has been so since his infancy.

I try to talk to my son and get him to see that the seventeen-year-old is not a good type, but he says he doesn't go around with him, he just likes to work on the

cars.

Please advise me how to handle this matter. My husband is stumped, too.

A YOU ARE TO BE congratulated that you have a son who is vitally interested in such a creative activity as working on motors. He evidently has a mechanical bent of mind and you would be very wise to encourage his interest in the field of mechanics.

Perhaps the solution of your problem would be to provide your son with opportunities at your own home to work on mechanical gadgets, or even on a small motor. He might continue to want to go to the other boy's house, but his visits would probably be less frequent.

Older boys usually have a certain glamour for younger boys, so it is not surprising that your son gets a lot of satisfaction out of being wanted by the older boy.

The older boy, on the other hand, sensing your son's tendency to put him on a pedestal, wants to impress him and feels that he can do this best by exaggerating his past experiences. He may have been in jail for speeding and may have been drunk at some time in the past, but do not assume that this is true just because he brags to your son about his escapades.

Inasmuch as it seems that the older boy and your son really work on motors and the objectionable aspect of the situation is limited

primarily to the bragging about past escapades, you have been wise in not prohibiting your son from seeing the other boy. He has evidently taken well your criticism of the older boy and has not felt it necessary to rise to his defense. It would be wise now not to continue criticizing the seventeen-year-old, lest you begin to arouse antagonism in your boy, an antagonism that might manifest itself in a determination to be with the older boy even more than he is now.

You indicate that your son, also, has many other interests. Your cue is to continue as you are now doing, urging your son to go out for track, encouraging his other school activities and his association with boys and girls of his own age. It is to be hoped, too, that he will continue his church activities. All of these influences are likely to far outweigh any influence the older boy may have.

However, if you feel that your son is spending more time than he should working on cars, you should talk with him about the situation and the two of you decide upon what seems to be a reasonable time limit for such activities.

If the older boy could visit in your home, if you or your husband could show an interest in motors, too, you might find that he responds to the Christian atmosphere of your home and would overcome the characteristics that are so objectionable.

Daniel M. Maynard

Welcome, Learner

(Continued from page 9)

"Honestly, Linda," the minister smiled at the girl, "we adults need you and your kind to wake us up. To say in your blithe, irreverent way that we can do a better job of making lines . . . and pleats!"

"The words you hear are real. The people who say them are real. You can give new meaning to them by listening with a fresh, questioning mind and doing what your heart tells you to do."

"What do I do now, Preach?" Linda asked humbly.

"Start with a fresh tissue, courtesy of First Christian Church," said Mr. Murphy handing her one from the box on his desk. "Then go on with the line you started—decorating the tree. But before you go, I will make some noises like a preacher. You say college rushes in on you and you just fall in line and hope past practices are adequate for present situations. You know, you are not only preparing for life in the future. This is life you are living now. Don't compromise and make-do now or you will find you are acting like an adult! Think about what you should do because you are you. Because words are inadequate—without meaning unless you do something that says, 'I'll listen, An-Lu. I'll be a friend. I'm here to help because I'm concerned.'"

Just then a rush of feet sounded in the hall. "Linda! Linda Wallace, where are you?" called a husky voice.

"Don't tell me it is 3:30!" Linda said. "It seems like only a few minutes ago we were talking about eagles and parachutes."

"I'll see you at the dinner tonight," Mr. Murphy said, as Linda left.

* * *

That evening at the dinner Mr. Murphy did not see Linda until she slipped into a vacant place beside him at the table.

"Shake hands with a learner, sir," she said, holding out her hand.

"What do you mean, Linda?"

"Would you believe it! Those kids think I'm grown up because I've been away to college. They think I know all the answers! You should have heard them, Mr. Murphy. 'What do you think about going steady?' 'Should you kiss a boy good night?' 'Why are you going to be a director of religious education?' and 'Why can't we play Elvis Presley records at our Sunday evening meeting?'"

"What did you do, Linda?"

"Well, I started to tell them all the answers. Then I happened to put my hand in my pocket and you know what I found!"

She held up the pleated piece of paper. "I'm becoming one of their

line, I thought, and part of their confusion. That is when I decided I was a learner! So instead of telling them what I had been told or what I thought, I asked them what they would do. And they told me! All fifteen of them. I think they answered their own confusion by talking, complaining, accepting, or refusing each other's advice. Most of them had already been told what to do but when they said to their friends, 'I'd do so and so' they were learning a lot more than if I told them all over again the things they knew by heart.

"You know, Mr. Murphy," Linda continued, "it is a lot harder to do what you say, than it is to say what to do! Wonder if I'll be able to do both?"

"So long as you wonder about it, Linda, and are concerned enough about it to talk, listen, and observe, you can do something. We need your new demonstration of love and concern in action. And now, on behalf of the brotherhood of learners, let me welcome you into the group." Mr. Murphy held out his hand and without hesitation, Linda grasped it tightly.

A New Kind of Christmas

(Continued from page 12)

each child in family a package or two of toys.)

CHILDREN: (*Laugh and say their thanks.*)

FATHER: (*Finds another package.*

Everyone shows surprise and interest.)

The children have had their surprise. Now, here is one for the grown-ups. Mother is the only one who shares this secret with me. She needed to know for she is the cook. Three guesses as to what it is. (*Waits for responses, then opens package. Holds four photographs for all to see.*) I invited these four boys to Christmas dinner. Ever since my college days, I have been aware of the loneliness of many foreign students. This year, under our new kind of Christmas, I resolved to do something about it. Mother and I had an unexpected dividend check a couple of days ago. We cashed it and have divided it equally into these four envelopes. It will give them some financial help with their university expenses. I shall put the envelopes under the tree, and when I give them to the boys, you must all shout, "Christmas Gift." (*At this moment the doorbell rings.*)

FATHER: (*Looks at watch and everyone turns also as he turns toward the door.*)

MOTHER: (*Beaming. Hands outstretched in motherly manner. Moves forward to door.*) The boys—for dinner!

Curtain

We Get Ready for Christmas in our House

(Continued from page 14)

Light third candle.

Prayer: As the Wise Men came, our heavenly Father, so we come to Thee this day. We do not have great gifts to bring, but we do offer our love and devotion. We thank thee for our family and the love we have for each other. May we think of our friends and neighbors this year as we have our own celebration. Help us to share thy great love with everyone we meet. May they see the love of Jesus in us. In His dear name we pray. Amen.

Fourth Sunday in Advent: (*Light three candles*)

Sing: Silent Night, Holy Night," No. 188.

Read: Story of the Birth of Jesus. Light fourth candle.

Sing: "Away in a Manger," No. 199.

Prayer: Christmas comes nearer, dear Father, and we ask that we may be ready for the birth of the Christ Child. We thank thee for the preparation for the great day. Be with our family that we may have love for each other and for those who have no families to love. Come into our hearts, Lord Jesus, we pray. Amen.

On Christmas Day light all candles and the Love Candle and let them burn as long as you can enjoy them. Sing together many of the carols and be thankful that you have spent the time preparing for this wonderful day.

Should Families Worship Together?

(Continued from page 25)

a separate experience apart from the rest, but with the knowledge that "Our Father who art in heaven" truly belongs to each of them.

Family worship is not only inspiring, it is educational. Here the root system of our Christian world is nourished.

Biblegram Solution

(Biblegram on page 25)

SOLUTION: "The LORD is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD" (Lamentations 3:25-26).

The Words

A Tooth	L Saddle
B Rooster	M Hook
C Tomtom	N Flash
D Save	O Window
E Ohio	P Total
F Tough	Q Fist
G Hose	R Shoot
H Flight	S Haail
I Quiet	T Tree
J Within	U Hood
K Turtle	V Daisy



BOOKS for the hearthside

For Adults

People of North and South alike will enjoy Harnett T. Kane's **The Southern Christmas Book** (David McKay Co., New York, 1958, 337 pages, \$4.95). Here are the customs of Christmas as they have been celebrated from Virginia to Texas, from Florida to Oklahoma, from 1607 to 1957. Most of the readers of this book will be amazed that there have been so many Christmases and that they have been observed in so many different ways. Not the least interesting for women who cook and for men who eat will be the recipes of cakes and breads of the season. The author is the well-known writer of such novels as *The Gallant Mrs. Stonewall*, *Lady of Arlington*, and *Louisiana Hayride*, himself a native of New Orleans.

The lost art of family singing should get a real boost if **Let's All Sing** by James F. Leisy (Abingdon, Nashville, 1959, 176 pages, \$2.95) were to find its way into homes. Here are over 150 songs, most of which will be familiar to those who have done some group singing, but all of which are easy to sing and enjoyable. The music is given in the simple form of a single melodic line which can be picked out on the piano with ease. The songs are arranged in six categories: *From Our Land*, like Billy Boy, Oh Susanna, Red River Valley, The Bonnie Blue Flag, Eating Goober Peas, The Railroad Corral; *From the Sea*, including Life on the Ocean Wave, Rio Grande, Spanish Ladies; *From Our Neighbors*, with Alouette, Funiculi, Funicula, My Heart's in the Highlands; *Of the Heart*, such as

Beautiful Dreamer, Sweet Genevieve, Last Rose of Summer; *Of the Spirit*, listing Fairest Lord Jesus, Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child, Roll, Jordan, Roll; *Twelve Songs of Christmas*, with Deck the Hall, Good King Wenceslas, The Twelve Days of Christmas. Get this book and make 1960 a singing year!

For Young People

Adventure is in store for the young readers of **River Boy** (The Westminster Press, 1959, 175 pages, illustrated, \$2.95) by Olive Price. Danny Beckwith, a thirteen-year-old lad, feels the call of the river as he looks at the Hudson from his lofty tree house. Many boys dream of the faraway places, but nothing happens. Not Danny, he dreams of being on a boat, of spending his life on the seas; and more quickly than he could expect, he was practically forced to a life on the sea. As a stowaway on the *Mollie-O*, he finds each day most interesting. Add to this the fact that he was living during the time of the Revolutionary War, and was confronted by the British soldiers on his very first day in New York. Yes, this novel has fun and adventure that young teens will enjoy.

A book for middle teens is **Tougher Than You Think** (The Westminster Press, 1959, 222 pages, \$2.95) by a popular writer for young people, James L. Summers. The novel is the story of Paul's journey into adulthood. A journey that includes an automobile accident; a misunderstanding with his parents, brother, and sister; a job selling

vanilla; and a stormy courtship. Struggling to be an adult turns out to be no picnic for Paul. While reading of Paul's complex but interesting experiences young people may at the same time receive encouragement as they face a similar growing-up process. The attractive jacket is illustrated by John Gretzer.

For Children

A delightful new book for children is **Once Upon a Holiday**, by Lillian Moore (Abingdon Press, 1959, 96 pages, \$2.50). It contains twelve poems and stories that have to do with twelve holidays or special days in the year's calendar. Some stories are about children and others are about animals. Each one is delightful. This is a good book for adults to read to children. Beginning readers also will enjoy it. Mrs. Moore planned it that way. In fact, the dedication page carries these words: "For Jonny to read to Mike."

Primary children will enjoy **Boloji and Old Hippo**, by Juanita Purvis Shacklett (Friendship Press, 1959, 128 pages. Cloth, \$2.95; paper, \$1.50). This is the story of eight-year-old Boloji who watched for and tried, with the best hunter in the village, to capture Old Hippo, who was eating up the gardens. When the family moved into the city, Boloji was sad, thinking he never would be a hunter and could not catch Old Hippo. But strange things happened. How he helped capture Old Hippo and all the adventures that went with it make an exciting story about life in Africa.

—Adrienne Adams



OVER THE BACK FENCE

Some Unpleasant Thoughts about Babies

Is it a strange thing to be considering such a topic in the midst of the Christmas season? Christmas usually resounds with pleasant, happy, grateful notes in song and story centering around the Babe of Bethlehem.

We should not forget, however, that there was much that was unpleasant in connection with that "far-off divine event." First there was the gnawing doubt in Joseph's mind about "this thing which had come to pass." Then followed a long, forced journey during late pregnancy from Nazareth to Bethlehem. A harried innkeeper, compelled by selfish, unthinking guests, turned the Nazarenes away from the comfort of his inn to a lowly manger. A bitter, jealous king sought to save his throne by the "Massacre of the Innocents." Then comes the sad climax of a period of life as refugees in Egypt. All was not sweetness and light "when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king."

The first of our "unpleasant thoughts" comes from a recent news item. A minimum estimate puts the number of babies born out of wedlock each year at 150,000, of which nearly half are to girls under 20. The church has largely put this unpleasant thought aside and has failed to take constructive, Christian action about it. Church and home together must make more than half-hearted attempts to help "those poor, unfortunate girls and their babies." One step is more adequate sex and family life education.

Students of population trends are writing of another unpleasant thought—too many babies are being born. This may not be a particularly serious problem for the

United States with its annual baby-crop of 4 million. Even here, however, warning voices are being raised that there is a limit to the number of people our productive powers can maintain at the present standard of living. The world picture is desperately different with populations in underdeveloped countries multiplying at frightening speed. Conscience will no longer permit man to decimate the population by wars, pestilence, famine, and accident. Therefore we must find other ways of preventing overpopulation of our earth. Christians must not ignore this problem.

Closely related to the above is another unpleasant thought. Too many babies are born in conditions of poverty, ignorance, disease, superstition, and fear. A recent television picture of an African infant with its chubby face covered with sores is a symbol of those millions of babies. Thank God he is a symbol also for what the churches and the United Nations are doing to "heal the hurts of the world," for a second picture of that same youngster showed him cured of his yaws by one injection of a modern drug. Christians can do and are doing something about these babies through Week of Compassion, One Hour of Sharing, and our regular missionary ministries around the world.

What shall we say further of unpleasant thoughts about babies? Much more could be said. Many of them grow up to be juvenile and adult delinquents, some of whom graduate into vicious criminality. Many millions never come under the ministry of the church or know the privilege of fellowship with Christ. That's enough for the unpleasant.

What can be done? Look at this picture: In ten years the U. S. has spent about 25 billion in nonmilitary foreign aid. In the same period we have spent 400 billion for all military purposes. Money is not the whole answer but a disturbing question arises: Is this good Christian stewardship? We must wrestle with that question.

#101 MIRO — "CHILDREN AND BIRDS" — 10 cards of one design



#105 LEE — "CHRISTMAS EVE"
10 cards of one design

#102 BETTINA — "PLAYMATES"
SERIES — 2 each of five designs



#103 KINGMAN —
"FOUNTAIN OF PEACE"
10 cards of one design

#104 DOMJAN — "FAIRY
TALE SHEPHERD", "FAIRY GODMOTHER"
5 each of two designs



The space for this advertisement has been contributed by this publication.

WITH EACH CARD SENT *A CHILD IS HELPED*

THE GIFT of health and hope is the Christmas present you give to millions of children in need — when you send UNICEF Cards. Through the United Nations Children's Fund the proceeds from just one single box of ten cards, priced at \$1.25 provides 45 hungry children with a glass of milk every day for a week or the vaccine to protect 60 children from tuberculosis. How truly the spirit of Christmas is captured when you know that through your remembrance a child will be helped. When you send UNICEF Cards the happiness you spread at Christmas extends to the farthest corners of the earth.

FILL IN AND MAIL COUPON. All cards are \$1.25 for a box of 10 with matching envelopes and bear a Season's Greetings message in the five official languages of the United Nations.

U.S. COMMITTEE FOR UNICEF—GREETING CARDS
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- ☐ #101 MIRO — "Children and Birds"
10 cards of one design
- ☐ #102 BETTINA — "Playmates" series
2 each of five designs
- ☐ #103 KINGMAN — "Fountain of Peace"
10 cards of one design
- ☐ #104 DOMJAN — "Fairy Tale Shepherd"
"Fairy Godmother" — 5 each of two designs
- ☐ #105 LEE — "Christmas Eve"
10 cards of one design

TOTAL BOXES _____ @ \$1.25 per box \$ _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZONE _____ STATE _____

a book or two or three to pin upon your christmas tree



THE BIBLE SPEAKS TO DAILY NEEDS. By *Georgia Harkness*. A little book with an enormous message; meditations applying Biblical teachings to day-to-day human problems. Each begins with a human need answered by a scripture passage. Self-examination questions and a prayer close each devotion. **\$1.50**

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